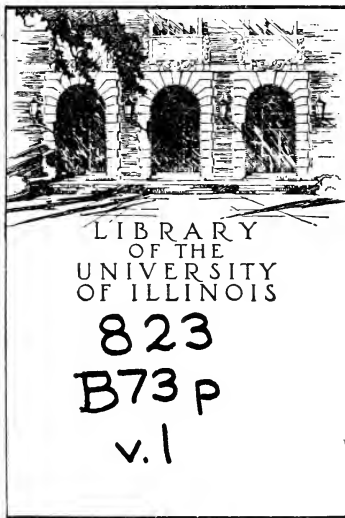




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THE  
PROTESTANT;  
A TALE OF  
THE REIGN OF QUEEN MARY.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF 'DE FOIX,' 'THE WHITE HOODS,' &c.

*Anna Eliza Brown*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:  
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PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.

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FITZ OF FITZ-FORD;

A LEGEND OF DEVON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PROTESTANT,"  
"WHITE HOODS," &c.

LONDON:  
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as a spring of the purest water, that rose near the spot, was held by tradition to have been the font of baptism to many of the first converts who embraced the Gospel in our Island. A few humble tenements, and a handsome stone-built house of the time of Henry the Seventh, that stood within a pretty garden, formed the village. The whole was remarkable for nothing so much as the beauty of its situation; where woods and water, together with the fresh verdure of the fields, combined to form a scene of that happy and cultivated character, so peculiar to our Island.

Such *was* Wellminster. But Time, that subdues empires as well as towns, whose touch withers alike the bloom of human beauty, and the pride of human art,—Time has long since passed over it with a destroying hand, and the church, the village are no more. So complete has been the ruin, that vainly would the traveller now seek to find even the smallest vestige of their former existence.

But though the works of man perish, his spirit is imperishable. And, hallowed by the memory of some great and honoured deed acted by that spirit, even a barren rock often becomes more interesting to posterity, by the association of kindred feelings, than a land glowing with beauty, unmarked, unendeared by moral sympathy.

During the reign of Edward the Sixth, Cranmer had placed in the hamlet of Wellminster a pastor of his own choice, Owen Wilford,—a man who for some time had served him in the capacity of secretary, but who, devoted to literature, and the quiet pursuits of a retired life, preferred the seclusion of a small country cure, to his office in Lambeth Palace, where he necessarily became engaged in affairs more immediately connected with the court. Owen was a zealous Reformer. He had resided in Germany during that eventful period, when the followers of Luther devoted their lives, and all that they possessed, to the reformation of the

Church. He had been the author of some learned tracts in support of his opinions; and it was by these that he at first became known to Cranmer.

Owen Wilford was a married man. He had a son and daughter (now grown up); nor did he enter into holy orders till Edward the Sixth allowed the clergy to have wives. Soon after, as we have stated above, Cranmer placed him at Wellminster. As a pastor, he was eloquent and zealous in the pulpit; and in his life and conversation, honest and sincere; whilst a thousand acts of kindness and benevolence endeared him to his simple flock, who looked to him as to a common father.

His wife, whose character was in many respects similar to his own, was alike beloved by the villagers; so that, what with their instruction and example, there was not perhaps a happier, or a more virtuous village in all England.

Cranmer, who really loved the pastor for the simplicity and excellence of his character, had

been desirous to promote him in the Church; but Owen declined this kind intention of his patron. Owen was indeed one of those rare men who love not this world's goods, for their own sake. He was fast declining into the vale of years. Contented with a sufficiency, and endeared to his parishioners, he did not wish for a change, especially as he considered that his children would be well provided for; his son Edward (now grown to man's estate, and travelling in foreign parts,) being the sole heir to his maternal uncle, a person of considerable opulence. For his children, therefore, he wanted nothing; and for himself he had enough, since his necessary wants and comforts were amply supplied; and he would often say, "that man was rich, who was content with what he had."

Whilst Cranmer lived unmolested, Wilford was secure by the favour of his excellent patron; but ever since the melancholy fate of that great martyr, he had looked forward, as a certain con-

sequence of his master's fall, to the day of persecution for himself. Cardinal Pole, acquainted with his character, and using towards him that moderation which he wished to be extended to all the Reformers, had suffered him to remain undisturbed in his cure, and contented himself with enjoining Wilford (as he had done all others of the clergy within his diocese) to perform mass in the Latin tongue, instead of the service of the English liturgy adopted in the reign of Edward the Sixth; to see that his parishioners came to confession, that the rood should be set up again in his church, and that holy bread and water should be distributed to the people. And though it was said that the enemies of Wilford whispered in the ear of the Cardinal, that he did not obey these orders, but still read the English liturgy, and preached against Popery as zealously as ever; yet the Cardinal, either from inattention, or an unwillingness to bring forward a man whose character he respected, but whose disobedience, if he did

so, he must punish by the laws against heresy, still suffered him to be undisturbed.

The insignificance, too, of the place, of which he was the pastor, had been in some measure his protection; so that, whilst the more known and distinguished clergy and the inhabitants of large towns were dragged to the stake, the little village of Wellminster for a time escaped the violence of the general persecution. Another cause also existed, that had hitherto helped to save Wilford. Sir Richard Southwell, high-sheriff of the county of Kent, a man of power and wealth, lived near the village, at his family mansion of Wellminster Hall; and, though a rigid bigot, had not interfered to injure Wilford; nay, it is not unlikely that he had extended to him his protection, since it was rumoured that the knight was under peculiar obligations to him for some extraordinary acts of service.

But, be it as it may, Sir Richard and Owen now lived as strangers to each other. And, though the good pastor was thankful to Pro-

vidence that he had hitherto escaped persecution, yet he did not place any reliance on the present silence with which he was passed over, and had long endeavoured to prepare his mind for the worst. Desirous to save his son from the dangers that threatened the Reformers in England, he took the first opportunity to write by a sure hand, bidding him to continue where he was, at Frankfort, till a change in the government, or till better times, might warrant his return in safety. Having finished and dispatched this letter, he prayed God that it might reach its destination and produce the desired end.

Thus in some degree relieved of this care, with a quiet but undeviating constancy, Owen Wilford continued the exercise of his duties, and stood openly and firmly in his pulpit a supporter of the Reformed Faith.

And as, when describing the character of a man, it is natural to say something of his per-



son, we shall state that Owen was of a tall and dignified figure. The expression of his countenance was intellectual; whilst an air of serenity and benevolence was an assurance of the simplicity and the kindness of his heart. A more venerable person could scarcely be imagined. Attired in his long black gown, his grey hairs falling over an elevated brow, whilst his furrowed cheek glowed with the fervour of religious feelings that animated with unusual lustre his expressive eye, he seemed to realize those ideas that we are apt to form of the primitive fathers of the Church; and, as he raised his hands towards Heaven to bestow upon his congregation the benediction of God, he appeared to be wrapt beyond the things of this world.

One morning, whilst Wilford was preparing to take his usual walk round the village of Wellminster, he was surprised by the sudden entrance of his old and faithful servant, Abel

Allen, who appeared greatly disturbed, and, coming up to his master, said in a most agitated manner, "Thornton is coming!"

"Thornton!" exclaimed Wilford, "Thornton! and to *my* house?"

"Ay, Thornton is coming, sure enough," replied Abel; "and I don't think he is coming alone either, for I saw him standing in the green lane near Gammer Plaise's cottage, with a couple of fellows of his own kidney, and I do think there was more of them still behind. But who cares for that?" added the old serving-man stoutly; "shall I knock him down, or shut the door in his face?"

"Do neither," replied Wilford; "I will not refuse to see him; although, if I did so refuse, I could find a warrant for it in my own breast. Yet, I will see him. Show him into the little oak parlour, and tell your mistress, Dame Alice, what sort of a visitor we are like to have. I will prepare my mind to meet that man, if I can, with composure."

Abel departed, to obey the instructions of his master; whilst Wilford, who appeared extremely affected by the very mention of Thornton's name, paced up and down the room with an agitation of manner that was rarely seen in a man of so mild and patient a temper. He then descended to the oak parlour, where he found his wife (who had been warned by Abel of Thornton's approach) busily engaged in putting several things away in a closet.

"Alice," said Wilford, "you have removed it; bring the book back again, and lay it open, as it was, upon the table."

"Nay, do not bid me," replied his wife in an imploring tone; "do not bid me; consider what it is."

"I do so," answered Wilford, "and therefore I command you to obey me. Shall I fear to have the service to my God in my mother-tongue upon my table, because Thornton, the Suffragan Bishop of Dover, is coming to my house? Shall I deny my Master before His

enemies, because they are *my* enemies too? Thank God, sinner as I am, I can meet Thornton with a clear conscience. Bring back the book this moment; and what have you done with Luther *De Captivitate Babylonica*?"

"Oh do not make me bring *that* book, I conjure you," said Alice, wringing her hands. "If you do, you are a lost man, though Cardinal Pole himself should plead for you. Be content, I have put the liturgy on the table again; be content with that. Why rush into danger? And oh, my dear Owen, my husband, don't, don't provoke Thornton; for my sake, for our children's, do be patient with him."

"Well, I will be patient, I will," replied Owen;—"he is coming. Surely I heard old Abel opening the house-door."

"Yes," said Alice, "and Thornton is speaking to him."

"Good God!" exclaimed Owen, "must I suffer that man in my house?"

“Hush, hush, for Heaven’s sake !” said Alice ; “he will hear you.”

Wilford threw himself into a chair. He looked pale, but endeavoured to assume a composed air ; whilst his wife, scarcely knowing what she did, yet desirous to seem to be employed about indifferent matters, busied herself with some little matters of domestic arrangement in the apartment. The door opened, and the Suffragan Bishop of Dover entered the room.

Thornton was a man about forty years old, above the middle stature, strong and robust in his limbs, and had a countenance, in the features of which, cunning seemed to contend with malice. There was about him that air of coldness, affected humility, and inflexibility of feeling, that makes up the character of a hypocrite. His address and conversation were of a cast that we should *now* term puritanical ; but Thornton was a zealous member of the Church

of Rome: and, by some means or other, he had grown rich, and even powerful, in the exercise of his zealous functions.

Wilford kept his seat; but Alice made the curtesy of salutation to the Suffragan Bishop; and he gave her a good morrow, without noticing the coldness of his reception from the master of the house.

“Master Wilford,” said Thornton, “some business of importance, of which I shall speak anon, has brought me hither. But how is your son? when had you tidings of him? and how is your pretty daughter, Mistress Rose? *Thy* children they are in the *flesh*; though, I grieve to say it, Master Wilford, they cannot be such in the spirit, since the new law, or rather the old law renewed, holds them illegitimate; no wedlock being allowed among the holy ministers of the Church.”

“If you are come, Master Thornton,” replied Wilford, “to discuss points of the new law with me, I neither seek nor entertain the

argument. My children are the offspring of a holy contract, sanctioned by God himself; and I never yet knew that human laws could set aside those that are of divine origin. But this is not the matter—your business with me, be pleased to state it, or I must bid you good day.”

“ I had hoped for a more kindly reception from you, Owen Wilford,” said the Suffragan, “ since I came as a friend: but good deeds in this world meet with foul recompense.”

“ They do, indeed,” answered Wilford, “ as none can better testify than yourself, Master Thornton, and that by experience; for you once served Archbishop Cranmer, and can tell how *he* was requited.”

Alice looked at her husband imploringly, as if she would say, “ Forbear that point; do not provoke him.” Thornton was unmoved: he had a conscience hard as the nether millstone, and he did not now choose to understand this glance at his own ingratitude to Cranmer.

“ I wait to learn the nature of your business with me,” continued Wilford ; “ and having done so, the sooner we part the better.”

“ His Grace, Cardinal Pole,” replied Thornton, “ languishes much, and being in weak health, he can no longer exert himself to take an active part in public affairs.”

“ I am sorry to hear it,” replied Owen, “ since I cannot choose but admire virtue even in an enemy, and the Cardinal’s moderation would adorn a better faith.”

The Suffragan showed no displeasure at this remark, but continued : “ I have full powers, Master Wilford, both from the Cardinal, as legate *a latere* to his Holiness Paul the Fourth, and from our gracious Sovereign, Queen Mary, and her council, to act in the place of the said Cardinal Pole, in the diocese of Canterbury ; being joined in commission with certain other appointed authorities. In short, I come to see that those statutes passed in the parlia-



ment of the second of the present reign, respecting the affairs of the Church, are duly and properly observed; and, for this purpose, I am now peregrinating the diocese of Canterbury.”\*

“By the instigation of my Lord of London,” said Wilford. “I perfectly comprehend it. Bonner, grown odious to the people by the cruelties he has exercised in his own diocese, to save himself, if possible, from utter detestation, has relaxed in some measure the persecutions of Smithfield; and now would cloak his malice, by extending them, with double fury, to the sees of other bishops. If I mistake not, Master Thornton, you were specially nominated Suffragan Bishop of Dover, by

\* In the articles sent by the Queen to her Ordinary, are these words. “Item: that every Bishop, Suffragan Bishop, and all other persons aforesaid, do likewise travel for the repressing of heresies and notable crimes, especially in the clergy, duly correcting and punishing the same according to law.”

the recommendation of my Lord of London. Doubtless you have his counsel what to do. Are you to begin with me?"

"Nay," said Thornton, "do not speak thus warmly. Did I repeat such words as you now utter, think what would be the consequence! But I will give you a proof of that moderation you are pleased to commend in his Grace, Cardinal Pole, my very good Lord. I will set down your words to the score of passion; and passionate men and madmen being of one nature, as the late learned medical doctor Butts used to say, I will pass them over unnoticed, and give farther proof of my good-will and friendship towards you."

"I want neither," replied Wilford. "Once more, tell me the matter of your business with me and, in God's name, depart, if you can, in peace."

"I came hither in peace," said the Suffragan, "and so will I depart. I come to propose some questions to you, Owen Wilford,

and to offer you some terms, easy to perform.—Allow me to call in my secretary.”

The Bishop of Dover, for a minute, quitted the room, and returned, followed by a little, thin man, dressed in a black gown, a bundle of papers in one hand, a satchel at his back, an ink-horn depending from his button, and a flat and square black silk cap on the crown of his head. His eyes were small and red like those of a ferret; and his nose, of considerable length, looked like a label for an inscription, upon which might be written the word “impudence.”

“Sit down, Master Secretary,” said the Suffragan, “and write the answers to some questions that I have to propose to this man here present.”

“Is my own house to be made a court of inquisition?” exclaimed Owen. “I shall answer you no questions till I see the warrant upon which you act.”

“The warrant is my word,” said Thornton haughtily.

“Not with me,” replied the Pastor calmly.

“Show this man the warrant, then, Thomas Cluny,” said the Suffragan to his Secretary. Cluny shuffled over the papers, took out a fair written parchment, to which was appended a large seal; and coming up to Wilford, he said, “Be pleased to see the Broad-seal of England. The warrant is from the Council; shall I rehearse the indictment?”

“No,” answered Wilford; “I see this is a net to catch me. But, thank God, I am prepared. What are your questions?”

“Have you,” said Thornton, “caused the rood, sent here at Candlemas last, to be set up in a fair loft in the Church of St. John the Baptist, in the Parish of Wellminster?”

“No!” exclaimed Wilford; “the wooden god of your idolatry lies now where it was left by your own people, in the belfry of the

church. I will never, like Nebuchadnezzar, set up a golden image,\* and bid the people to fall down and worship it, at the sound of the lute, harp, cornet, or dulcimer. I deny the worship of *your* cross, and I will never yield to it."

Thornton shook his head, whilst Cluny's square cap shook in accompaniment to the same. He dipped his pen in the ink-horn. "Write down that he denies the cross," said the Suffragan.

"An offence under the statutes of Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth, and Henry the Fifth," said Cluny.†

"Write, that I deny your crosses of wood and stone," said Wilford, "and you will find

\* The rood was an image of Christ between St. John and the Virgin Mary. It was generally magnificently painted and gilt. It was set up towards the east, in a loft of rich Gothic screen-work, styled the Rood-loft.

† In 1554 the Parliament passed an act to revive the cruel statutes of Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth, and Henry the Fifth, against all persons convicted of heresy.—See Burnet.

that comes under the statute of God's first commandment—'Thou shalt worship no graven image.'"

"That is the Levitical law," cried Thornton. "Why, the holy Saint Austin defend us! have we to deal with a Jew here?"

"Shall I write down that Master Wilford confesses only the Levitical law?" inquired Cluny. "That offence comes equally under the aforesaid statute."

Wilford looked at the secretary a moment with contempt; but, resuming his composure, he said, "Why should I be angry with thee, poor wretch? thou art nothing more to this man than that pen is to thee,—his instrument. I will save your pains; write all in one word,—write that I deny the supremacy of the Pope, the errors of the Church of Rome, and acknowledge only the truth of the Christian faith, as it is revealed to us in the Gospel itself. I will answer no more questions. And now do your work, for I am ready."

“That’s clear!” exclaimed Cluny; “that comes under the direct statute for heresy, in the second of the present reign. Denies the Pope! here be heresy indeed, I must make a note of this;” and again Cluny dipped his pen into the little ink-horn. “This ink is as bad and as muddy as if it was manufactured in a scrivener’s shop.”

Cluny once more prepared to write; but Alice, who had listened, in an agony of feeling, to the bold and open confession made by her husband of his faith, now sprang towards the table, and snatching the pen from Cluny’s hand, she exclaimed, “You shall not, you shall not write it! He is no heretic, but a good Christian! Spare him! oh! spare him!”

The Suffragan Bishop, who had hitherto stood quite unmoved, now interfered; and bidding Alice be quiet, or that she would make things worse, he desired Cluny to continue his business; whilst Alice wept and wrung her hands alternately, assuring the Bishop that her

husband was a true Christian, and imploring Wilford not to provoke the anger of his enemies. Wilford gently removed her from him, and stood silent, with a firm and upright demeanour, as the secretary wrote down the confession he had made of his faith. This accomplished, Thornton whispered something in the ear of his secretary, who departed, and in a few minutes returned, accompanied by a number of persons, headed by the town-constable of Canterbury; this band having purposely been laid, as it were, in ambush near the house, ready to obey the orders of Thornton. Alice saw them pass on the outside of the window, as they came to enter the house; and uttered a loud scream, clinging to her husband, and almost fainting in his arms.

“Take the woman off,” said Thornton to Cluny, who had again entered the room.

“You shall not touch her,” exclaimed Wilford, in a tone of more passion than he had yet used; “she is my wife, my dear and ho-



noured wife. God gave her to me, and none but God shall part us.”

“Hear him!” said Thornton, “hear him! he calls his harlot his wife! But this must be no longer endured. The Church has too long dealt mercifully with thee. Such open shame may no longer be endured.—Cluny, I say, take that woman from the man, and let them both hear the denunciation of the true Church against their offence. I arrest you, Owen Wilford, on your confession, for heresy.\* I expel you in the name, and by the authority given under the warrant of the Queen and Council. I expel you from this cure as a married priest, as an obstinate and disobedient heretic, and as a traitor to his Holiness the Pope. You, and the harlot you call your wife,

\* Burnet declares that not less than *twelve thousand* of the clergy were turned out of their livings, under the Queen’s proclamation, for having wives—and Fox tells us, that many of these unhappy men were accused of heresy, and suffered martyrdom. One of the charges brought against Cranmer was, for having a wife.

are henceforth for ever parted; and she will be made to do a necessary penance for her offence, as the law enjoins.”

“Under the proclamation against harlots and disorderly persons,” said Cluny, “of the second of the present reign, the said penance to be done bare-footed, in a white sheet, with a faggot in one hand, and a taper in the other, in the nearest church or churches of the parish or parishes where the said offence was committed, according to the said proclamation of the said date.”

“My wife! my poor Alice!” exclaimed Wilford, bursting into tears, “be of good cheer—look up, sweetheart, and comfort me in the hour of my sorrow; for I am an old man, well nigh broken down with years, and it may be that I want God’s grace to bear this trial. Where is our child, where is poor Rose?”

“Where are you, Owen,” said Alice, “oh! where will you be.—Good God! will they take you from us, and must I and my poor girl live

to see you in a prison! Oh! have these men no hearts?—Speak to Thornton. He must, he will hear you—I am sure he will! I will kneel to him to beg mercy for you, so that they may not take you to a prison.”

“The statute for heresy commands it,” said Cluny, again shuffling amongst the papers. “Here is the Act.—‘That the prisoner or prisoners, on suspicion thereof (that means being suspected of heresy, Dame Alice,) shall be taken *in corpore* (meaning in the body, Dame Alice,) to the nearest prison or prisons, there to be held *in loco* (that is, in that place, Dame Alice,) till he or they be brought before the appointed authorities of archbishop, bishops, suffragan bishops, archdeacon or deacons, prelates, priests, or proctors; or in default thereof, that he or they be brought before the nearest sitting magistrate, justice of the peace, mayor, port-reeve, constable, bailif, or bailie for the time being.’”

“A truce with this jargon,” said Wilford,

“and tell me where I am to go, and what will become of my poor wife, and my innocent daughter, my dear Rose.”

“Mercy will be shown to them, and indeed to you, unless you are all obstinate,” said Thornton: “you must to prison, and the woman too; for the present, your daughter will only be expelled this house.”

“At present the women having been only charged with offences under the proclamation against disorderly persons,” said Cluny, “the one being a naughty woman, and the other a bastard of the same, they must both be expelled the house.”

“Is this your mercy,” replied Wilford, “to cast upon the wide world an aged and honourable matron? to cast her from the sanctity of an honest home, for no other offence than that of having lived for more than thirty years the wife of a man who, since his marriage with her, has taken holy orders?”

“Ay, and mercy it is,” said Thornton,

“ when compared to what her shame deserves. A priest can have no wife.”

“ Why Cranmer was a married man,” answered Wilford, “ when you, Thornton, were his secretary, as well as myself, at Lambeth ; and you never thought fit to cavil at it then. You were humble and observant in your manners to the prelate’s wife, and she did you many an act of service, as well as thy martyred Lord.”

“ Ay,” said Thornton, “ it is true ; but I have long since repented me of that in sackcloth and ashes, repented that I could ever bow me down to Jezebel : yea, better had it been for my soul, had I rose up, and cast her down to the dogs.”

“ Hypocrite !” exclaimed Wilford. “ Gracious Heaven ! how long will this man be suffered to persecute thy people, and to belie thy word ! Look on me, Thornton ! Dost thou remember when thou and I were both of us secretaries to Archbishop Cranmer ?”

“ I do remember a time of sin and sorrow,” answered Thornton, “ when I did serve Satan and the man Cranmer, whom you call Archbishop ; when King Henry the Eighth (St. Peter assoil him) denied the supremacy of the Pope, and set up a king-worship of his own ; for the which offence, his Holiness, Paul the Fourth, of Rome, hath been pleased to absolve this repentant realm of England on its return to him, like the prodigal to the father in holy writ. I remember the days of my shame ; wherefore, then, shouldst thou speak of Cranmer ?”

“ They were the days of thy shame, indeed !” said Wilford : “ for Cranmer, thy gracious master, took thee up when thou wert nothing : he fed thee at his board, cherished thee in his bosom, and was as a father to thee and me ; and how didst thou repay him ?—With the basest ingratitude thou didst join with Gardiner to ruin him with King Henry : and when thine own letters were found to convict thee of the foul

deed, then how thou didst kneel and beg for pardon! then thou didst stoop to solicit *me* to plead for thee, and I was thy dear Master Wilford, thy kind Master Wilford, and thy pitying friend; and Cranmer was thy merciful, very good Lord; and thou didst then compare thyself with the prodigal, and him with the father who killed the fatted calf: and Cranmer, ever generous, humane, and noble, Cranmer forgave thee! no punishment followed thy offence; or long since thy name would have been numbered with traitors, who meet the reward of their deserts."

"If I sinned in humbling myself to Cranmer, as you would insinuate," replied Thornton, "it was the sin of necessity; and his Holiness Paul has absolved us of all such sins, and the gates of the blessed St. Peter are once more open to us, since her Highness has consented to pay his pence-money. Meet it is that it should be so, since we should render to all, and especially to saints, their due. But remember I quitted the

service of Cranmer long before King Henry's death."

"Cranmer, I remember, sent thee from his service," said Wilford; "for, though he forgave, he never more trusted thee. And in revenge of this, thou, Thornton, thou wast the man who busied thyself to bring him to his ruin. *Who* marshalled the Lieutenant of the Tower the way to Cranmer's lodging to arrest him? *Who* held the torch to light him up the stairs? Thornton, thou didst it! It was thy hand, thy heart, thy act, that helped thy benefactor to his death. I lost patience this day when I heard but thy name; few things could have so moved me."

"I shall not trouble myself farther with you," replied the Suffragan coolly; for, unable to answer the charges of ingratitude which Wilford brought to his recollection, he instantly turned to the business before him. "Secretary Cluny," he continued, "proceed to make out the committal of this man to Canterbury Castle; I will



put my hand and seal to it, for I will no longer hold parley with such a heretic."

"It were to be *particeps criminis*, if you did," answered Cluny, "and against the statute. Hath the prisoner any other name, cognisance, or appellation, besides that of Owen Wilford?"

"He has no other," said Thornton, "unless it were the name he, like a false-hearted liar, assumed when he once fled from England, and travelled to Rome itself in disguise."

"Shall I put down an *Alias*, then?" inquired Cluny.

"There is no need of that," said Thornton: "the evidence is clear."

"The evidence is most clear and satisfactory," answered Cluny, "being his own confession; and if we wanted more, I am a witness. And here, I think, Master Thornton, we have as pretty a case, as can be, for the writ *De heretico comburendo*. Be so good, Dame Alice, as to sit down and be quiet, and do not

disturb this reverend gentleman, and an officer of the law, in the execution of their duties.”

Cluny proceeded to write, as fast as his pen could go, the warrant for committal. Whilst he did so, Thornton demanded of Wilford his keys with much insolence of manner. “Take them,” said Wilford; “there needs no violence, since I know I have no choice, but must needs surrender them to you.”

“Master Attorney, Secretary Cluny,” said Thornton, “I shall depart anon with the prisoner; and, as he is a man known to be dangerous in his speech, and has led astray many of the servants of his Holiness and of her Majesty, I shall not leave him till we arrive near Canterbury. When I am gone, you will search the house, and bring with you all such books and papers as may be necessary to convict this man of heresy. It will be a great act of justice to bring him to the stake, and to clear the house of the contamination of heretical doctrines. I shall leave Ralph Miller, the catchpole, to assist

you in the work. I must now proceed to the church, to give orders about setting up the rood in the loft. You, Cluny, will presently follow me to Canterbury."

"The old woman goes to prison," said Cluny; "what is to be done with the young one?"

"My child! my Rose!" exclaimed Wilford, "let her go with us."

"There is no charge against her," said the Suffragan. "She may rest at large, but she and all your people must this night quit the house; Friar John de Villa Garcina is for the present appointed to take charge of your flock, and lead back the stray sheep into his Holiness's fold."

"What!" exclaimed Wilford, "Friar John, the Spanish monk who was placed with Cranmer to work upon his mind; and, by flattery, cunning, and the most consummate arts, to induce that great man to commit the only act of weakness he was ever known to fall into; must

Friar John have the charge of my village? It was he who wrought upon Cranmer to sign his recantation. For which act my noble master extended his right hand to the burning flame, till it was withered and consumed before his eyes. Must Friar John become the wolf to prey upon my innocent flock?"

"Friar John, for the present, will hold the cure of this place, till a proper person can be appointed," said Thornton; "the work of faith will thrive when he sets about it."

"Rather say, the work of destruction," added Wilford. "But I must submit. I will learn patience. For shall I so long have taken good at the hand of my Father, and shall I not take evil also? I yield, Thornton, for the power is given you over me. Yet, if you have one feeling common to human nature, even to the most savage among men, do not refuse a father's prayer; let me see my child. Let me bless my poor Rose, and I will depart with you to prison without complaint."

Thornton, though it cannot be supposed that he complied with this request from any motive of feeling, did not, however, refuse it; and the father received permission to see his daughter ere he left the house. Soon after, old Abel Allen, who had learned from the attendants of the Suffragan the duty they had to perform, feeling anxious to see his master before he departed to a prison, came into the room just at the moment when the good pastor's daughter also entered it, to bid a melancholy farewell to her parents.

## CHAPTER II.

ROSE WILFORD was about seventeen years old, of a light and small figure, and possessed in her countenance that indescribable expression of simplicity and good-nature, that wins the heart almost at the first glance. Yet, however pleasing Rose might appear to a stranger, it was only her more intimate friends who could duly appreciate her character. With the world, she might be deemed merely a good-natured girl, who, making no pretensions to any thing at all out of the ordinary way, and being modest and simple in her deportment, was not suspected by the generality of persons to possess a mind of a higher and a better order than themselves. Her education had been the care of her fond father, who, knowing the times in which she

was likely to live, early prepared her mind to meet them; so that the lessons of fortitude and of prudence he had inculcated, found a practicable example of their utility in the scenes that daily passed almost before her eyes. These lessons, and these scenes of suffering among the Reformers, together with the peril in which Rose long knew her father stood, had given her a serious turn of thought, and considerably checked the natural vivacity of her spirits; so that, whilst yet a girl, she was a woman both in mind and manners.

Rose entered the room with a calmer and more composed countenance than might have been expected; and, whilst her mother stood sobbing and lamenting her husband's fate, in all the bitterness of sorrow, Rose gently whispered her to bear up her heart for her father's sake, and to trust in God for his deliverance. She then turned to Wilford and begged his blessing.

“Thou hast it, my child,” said Wilford, “thou hast my daily blessing and my prayers.

May the God of all comfort, indeed, bless you! Rose, thy father is going to a prison. But be of good cheer, my girl, and remember there is One who is never deaf to the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners, and that those who suffer for His sake, shall never meet loss. Though their bodies lie in the dust, yet shall they see God, and know Him even as they are known. Thornton," he added, turning to the Suffragan, "may this poor blossom of comfort that still hangs, though drooping, upon the withered tree of my falling house,—may she sometimes be suffered to visit me in my prison? If you are a man, do not tear her from me at once—do not shut her out from these old eyes for ever—let me look upon her whilst sight is left to me in this world. To do so can neither hurt God nor man."

"I do not know that I should be warranted," said Thornton, "in allowing it. But, as far as I can go, I wish to use moderation towards yourself, and all other unhappy persons, whose guilt may bring them under my hands, during



the peregrination of my commission. Still, I do not think I should do right in letting any person but the members of our Church, who may convert, have access to a heretic ; I think I am not warranted."

"Certainly not by the statute," said Cluny.

"Still, however," continued Thornton, "it may depend upon the damsel herself ; if she is docile and willing to hear reason, and—in short, I must see what stuff she has in her, and then I may pronounce on this question. Master Secretary, be pleased to make notes of her words. Come hither, maiden," said Thornton, in a milder tone than he had yet used : "of what Church are you ?"

"Of the Catholic," answered Rose.

"Humph !" said Thornton ; "the Reformers say as much. But I suppose you are a chip of the old block. Are you of the Catholic, Universal, Apostolic, and Roman Church ? answer me that !"

"Good lack," said Rose, who dreaded no-

thing so much as an answer that might be construed into a motive for keeping her from her father; "how should a poor simple maid like me take upon me to hold debate with you who are of the schools? I am a Christian, I hope; and if the Catholic, Universal, Apostolic and Roman Church believe what I do, they may be Christian people also, though I may not have sense enough to hold an argument on terms. So I trust your wisdom will not take offence, if I say, it is too deep for my simpleness."

"What am I to write down?" inquired Cluny of the Suffragan; "for this answer amounts to nothing. Be pleased to tell me, Master Thornton, for I really do not understand her."

"Nor is there need you should," said Rose, "since the Suffragan of Dover bid you write down my words. To understand them, I take it, is not your office; and the Bishop, I am sure, will not press upon a poor girl questions beyond her years."

“By the rood,” observed Cluny, “you are a sly one, pretty Mistress Rose, or I am much mistaken. You would do to shift a point of law as well as Master Sergeant Twistem himself. Had you been a man, a gown and a trencher cap would be all you needed to fit you for a bencher; you seem to have a pretty notion of argument too.”

“Her answer is knavish and incomprehensible,” said Thornton: “one would think she had studied the law.”

“Alack!” replied Rose, “if it is so, it can have nothing in it like law, I am sure; since law is made to uphold justice and truth, and knavery is opposite to both.”

“This is a pretty bird, indeed!” said Cluny; “but we will teach her to sing out a full strain, and then see if she is a bird fit for a cage or not. Put her to the proof; touch her on the Sacraments, Master Thornton.”

“No, no!” answered Thornton, “she is a young thing, I shall see more of her; I will

not take the words of ignorance from her mouth, to catch her by them. I will take care to see her, to instruct her ; I will not harm her."

" Thank God ! I bless you for that," cried Alice: " you will not hurt my child ? Thank Heaven, at least you are pitiful to her !"

" I have a feeling of kindness for her indeed," said Thornton, " and it shall do you no harm that I have it ; and Master Wilford will doubtless be grateful."

" No," said Wilford, " not if your kindness aims at overturning the principles of my child. I would rather that you tore her from my heart at once, than that you should tamper with her mind."

" Be silent, father," whispered Rose softly ; " do not fear for me. Do not say a word that may hinder our meeting in the prison." And turning to Thornton, she added aloud, " I am told that I am this night to quit my home. May I crave your farther indulgence that I may be allowed to remove some few

things necessary for the comfort of my parents? Old Abel Allen will help me to do so; and whoever you please shall see what I take. Much I cannot take, since I know not where I shall this night rest my head.”

“But I know where you shall find a home, Mistress Rose,” said old Abel, who dashed a tear from his cheek with a hand as rough and as hard as a horn; “my master’s child shall never want a home whiles I can work, or beg to get her one. My sister Littlewit, an honest widow of Canterbury, has a decent lodging, and thither will I take you.”

“Thank you, Allen,” replied Rose, “and I will be no cost to you, since I purpose to labour to help my poor father in prison.”

“I will see that you shall want nothing, Mistress Rose,” said Thornton, “unless you are obstinate. But the time waxes on. Take your leave of your father, for he must depart. Cluny, call in the bills; the man and woman must both to prison.”

Wilford embraced his child. "Rose, my beloved Rose," said he, "this is but the beginning of sorrows. Remember the lessons that I have so often taught you, and that now is the time to practise them. Comfort your poor mother; speak to her, child; she has not thy strength of mind to meet evils firmly. Be kind and a comfort to her in her prison, and God shall pour blessings on that young head, for He loves a dutiful child."

"My mother, my poor mother!" said Rose, "what can I do to comfort her? Oh, my mother, trust in God in this hour of tribulation; and though He seems to withdraw Himself from us, as if He were gathered into those clouds and darkness that hang about His dwelling-place, yet darkness to Him is as light. He sees us in our hour of trouble, and He will never forsake us."

"My child! my child! God bless you! and may He have pity upon your father!" was all that the afflicted Alice could answer to her

daughter's pious address. Wilford looked upon them both for a moment with fixed attention: not a tear was in his eye; he seemed to be struggling with the powerful workings of nature to preserve his composure in these last trying moments; but his lips quivered, and the bystanders could observe a convulsive movement in his throat. The struggle was too much; and nature gained the mastery, as he burst into a flood of tears that coursed down his venerable face, and would have moved to pity any hearts but those that were rendered callous by cruelty and superstition. Wilford broke from the man into whose custody he had been given by Thornton, and fervently clasping his aged partner to his bosom, he exclaimed, "My wife! my wife! and must we part after thirty years of mutual love? Must man tear asunder what God had joined in one heart, one soul, one interest? Time had left us but a few years longer; and those are cut short by oppression, before death dissolves our bond. I

could—I think I could bear much yet,—poverty, sickness, imprisonment,—yea, the stake itself were better than this parting; for I know they will sunder us at the prison. We may never meet again on earth: look up then, sweetheart, and give me one kiss before I go.”

Alice did indeed look up; and, embracing her husband, she repeatedly kissed his forehead, his cheeks, his lips, as if she would concentrate in that moment the warm and holy affection of years of conjugal felicity and love. Thornton, on seeing this, turned aside with affected abhorrence; whilst Cluny drew his trencher-cap more towards the front of his face, and, shaking his head, looked with a reproving air at poor Alice and her husband.

“What!” exclaimed Thornton, “what! act abominations thus in the face of open day! This is a sight enough to make the heavens come down in vengeance upon you both. A priest! a man wearing that gown, as a member



of the Church, and thus to play the wanton in the very sight of God's saints !”

“ Why,” said old Abel Allen, “ no one sees it but us ; and which of us be saints, I trow ? May it be your worship or master attorney ? And if so, you are the first saints that ever I heard of that would take offence at a man for loving his wife.”

Thornton did not deign at present to notice old Abel ; but, turning to the catchpole, he said, “ Take away the woman from that man's embrace ; take her off, this moment ; or I shall think myself a participator in this man's shameless sin, if I suffer the kiss of a heretic in my sight !” Thornton was obeyed.

Wilford remained silent for a moment ; but he looked first upon Alice, and then upon Rose, with an expression the most heart-rending. At length he bent his head, and put both his hands over his eyes, as if he would shut out the sight of what was nearest and dearest to him on earth

in the endeavour to calm his feelings. Once more he looked up; he seemed an altered man: the tear was no longer in his eye, although a few moist drops still hung upon his cheek. His manner was composed, quiet, and unresisting. "Thou, heavenly Father!" he exclaimed, "hast appointed to all men their trial, and their day of grace; oh! teach me submission. Bow this proud heart before Thee. Calm my spirit, and make me patient to take meekly this cup of affliction, and, if it be Thy will, to drain it to the last dregs cheerfully. In all things, I submit myself to Thee.—Farewell, wife!—farewell, Rose! May God bless you both.—Now, Thornton, I am ready."

The Suffragan Bishop led the way, followed by Wilford and Alice, both in custody of his officers. As they passed the door of the house, Abel Allen, heedless of the presence of Thornton, rushed forward and caught Wilford by the gown. "My master, my dear master," said the old serving-man, "what will become of

you? and don't go away without saying a good-bye to your poor old servant. I will come to you in the prison, and I'll do any thing for you. I'd go there in your stead if they would let me.—Do please to stand off," continued Allen, addressing the officers, "and let me say a last word to the master in whose family I have lived ever since I was a hand high. I only want to ask him a thing or two, that can hurt nobody."

"Good people," said Wilford, "indulge this honest man's wish. Stand off a moment, and let him speak with me." The request was granted. "Well, Allen," continued Wilford, "your master goes before you. If you are put to the proof, do not shrink from following his steps; for remember for *whose* sake it is we are thus tried."

"I do, I will," answered Abel; "nay, I could find it in my heart to ask to go to prison with you even now, but that I know I may serve you more by being out of one. But

what I wanted to say is, that I don't half like Thornton's civility to Mistress Rose, for people do say that he never spares a pretty lass without he has something bad in his head about her. I will work these old hands to the bone," continued Allen, as he held them up, "before she shall ever come to the pass to go to the Bishop of Dover for care. Men say that he likes a fair damsel as well as ever Gardiner did, with all his sanctity."

"I have heard as much," said Wilford; "and the thought is like an adder stinging the heart of a father, when he thinks that his child may be in danger from such a man, and that he can no longer protect her."

"But Sir Richard Southwell may and ought to do something," replied Allen; "I'll go to him myself, though I know how you have kept aloof from him ever since what happened before young master went abroad. What will your son, what will Master Edward say, when he hears of this chance?"

“ He must long have been prepared to hear of it,” replied Wilford, “ since he knows how the times are in England, and that I could not always hope to escape them. God grant that he has my last letter, and may not return hither ! Do you, Abel (for whom else can I trust ?)—do you be a father to your master’s child, and God will reward you.”

“ A father to my dear young mistress !” cried Allen. “ May I never know what a moment’s peace is in Heaven or on earth, if I am not father, mother, servant, and brother, and all to her now ; and I’ll knock down Thornton if he does but look at her.”

“ Be careful what you do, Abel, for her sake as well as mine,” said Wilford. “ There is one thing I would ask of you. You are allowed to help Rose in securing some necessaries for our comfort ; if it is possible, bring my English Bible to the prison ; it may be useful in that tongue to some fellow-sufferer, who might not be able to read it in the original.”

“That I will, if I can,” answered Abel; “I’ll go back now and see what I can save from the clutches of that long-nosed rascally attorney. There’s not a more dirty fellow in all Canterbury; and he was once secretary to Bonner. And who ever served the devil unless it was one of his own imps? Farewell, master; I’ll do my best for you and Mistress Rose, and bring the Bible to you, though Thornton, and Harpsfield, and the Pope himself, should stand in the way to bid me back again.” So saying, Allen, sanctioned by long service, and the warm affection that makes men forgetful of the distinctions of place in the hour of affliction, shook his master heartily by the hand, and returned back to the house.

Thornton now, more fully to indulge his malice, and to show the power that he had over Wilford, ordered him and Alice to be shut into a barn that stood near the church, whilst he proceeded to give orders for putting up the rood, to clear the desks of the liturgy

in the English tongue, and all other books belonging to the service adopted in the time of Edward the Sixth, to make way for masses and missals, and all the other requisites of the Popish worship; and here, for the present, we must leave him, whilst we return to the good Pastor's house.

When old Abel Allen returned back to the little oak parlour, he found Thomas Cluny, the pettifogging attorney, and his understrapper, Ralph Miller, the catchpole, busily engaged in rummaging over the contents of a closet, cabinet, and writing-table. Here lay books thrown indiscriminately together; there, many a fair written discourse, the production of Wilford's own pen, for the benefit of his congregation. And all the little articles of Alice's neat housewifery and poor Rose's industry, were seen lying tossed and tumbled about without mercy, under the hands of these inquisitors. "What have we here?" said Miller, holding up by the corner a book

printed in the black letter and bound in vellum.

“Alack!” said Rose, “that book is one of my mother’s: she used it to help my father in edifying any of his parishioners who might be afflicted in conscience.”

“Let’s see the title of it, Ralph,” cried Cluny, and he read aloud, “*A Salve for a sore Soul; or, a Plaister taken from the House of Comfort.* That’s foul, that’s traitorous. Why that book was written by Doctor Mackerel, alias Captain Cobler.”\*

“I don’t care who it was written by,” said Rose, “there are many good things in that book, and I do not believe that Doctor Mackerel wrote it any more than I did.”

“And what in the devil’s name is this?” cried Miller.

“Nay,” said Rose, “pray spare that book; give it me; it is—it is——”

\* Dr. Mackerel headed a rebellion in the reign of Henry the Eighth, under the name of Captain Cobler.



“It is a book of magic, as I live!” exclaimed the catchpole. “I’ll not touch it, I’ll not put my hand near it, lest the foul fiend should come up in his own person. I’ll swear that I saw in it all the damning and damnable characters of magic, the whole cabalistic alphabet at once.”

“That comes under the statute,” said Cluny, taking up the book, “against witches, witchcraft, wizards, sorceresses, jugglers, cunning women, and astrologers. So, so, Mistress Rose! I see we shall have a precious pot uncovered here.”

“Alas! gentlemen,” said Rose, weeping, “how can you call the book by such hard names? It is Greek; it is the *Phædon* of Plato, written fairly out by the unhappy Lady Jane Dudley’s own hand. Cranmer, who dearly prized the book because it was her doing, gave it into my father’s keeping, when his troubles first began, before he was sent to the Tower. And when Cranmer was burned, my father kept

the book in memory of him, as well as of the Lady Jane."

"Yes, yes," cried Cluny, "I knew, from the first, that it was Greek. But I wanted to try you, just to frighten you a little, to see if you would speak the truth. I know Plato very well; he was a great divine, quite a Saint, and much favoured by the Pope. Pray, Mistress Rose, do you read Greek?"

"My father gave me the tongues," answered Rose, "as a part of my daily lessons, and I hope that I have profited something by his instruction."

"I warrant you have," said Cluny, "and that you would use your tongues, as you call them, to chop doctrines with me. But we must go on with our work.—Ralph Miller, hand me down that book in the red velvet cover, with the silver clasps."

Rose seemed concerned, and stood anxiously expecting the result of the inspection. Cluny looked at it with an air of self-importance,

shook his head, and said, "That book is enough to do your father's business; that comes directly under the prohibition of the proclamation in the second of the present reign. That's the English Liturgy.—Ralph Miller, put that into the satchel; that's evidence.—And what have we here? *The Supplication of Beggars, by Simon Fish*. Pshaw! that's a stinking fish, indeed; it savours of Luther, Calvin, and Knox, all in one mess; it has an odour worse than that of an old tripe-wife's tub. Let the fish go into the satchel, Ralph Miller; and here, let it keep company with the *De Captivitate Babylonica* of Luther; add to it this infamous book of *The Whore of Babylon Unmasked in her Scarlets at Rome*; and then, I think, you will carry with you as pretty a bundle of heresy as ever the devil wove into one knot."

"They are all evidence," said Miller.

"Evidence!" echoed Cluny, "better evidence than a thousand tongues; every page is evidence; any one of them is enough to con-

vict an offender, since her Grace, Queen Mary, has been pleased to make it high treason to have an heretical book in any person's house. And Master Wilford's name I saw in every volume."

"Certainly," said Miller, "that is presumptive evidence that they were his books."

"It is evidence," cried Cluny, "presumptive, positive, and circumstantial. The Earl of Surrey lost his head for a coat of arms, on the same kind of evidence; the fact of treason, therefore, is assumed."

"We have now pretty well done with the books," said Miller. "Here is one called *Quoth He, and Quoth I*; is that heresy, Master Attorney?"

"Heresy!" exclaimed Cluny, "heresy! why I pity thy ignorance, catchpole Miller; it is a gem amongst books, a very pearl cast amongst swine. *Quoth he and Quoth I*, is a work of Sir Thomas More's, and a sweet companion it is to his blessed book on the *Comfort of Tri-*

*bulation, and the Supplication of Souls in Purgatory.*”

“And you will not take them too?” said Rose; “surely you do not call them harmful?”

“Keep the peace, Mistress Rose,” cried Cluny; “keep the peace; don’t disturb an officer of the law in his duty. And please to hand me over that book that the old man took off the table just now.”

“I can’t spare that book,” said Abel very coolly; “I keep that for my own use.”

“What!” cried Cluny, “contumacious? Do you dare to interfere with justice? Do you know the statute, the penalty for such an act? That all such person or persons, so hindering, letting, obstructing, or offending, the said officer or officers, shall be liable to——”

“I know nothing about *statues*,” said old Abel bluntly; “but I know the book is mine, and I won’t part from it, and I have it. And you know, Master Attorney, there’s an

old saying, that possession is nine points of the law; and if you want a tenth, and attempt to take it from me, I'll knock you down, and that will be law with a strong arm, after your own fashion." And Abel shook his fist at the attorney as he spoke.

"Ralph Miller," said Cluny, "you are a witness. This man obstructs an officer at law in the execution of his duty. You are also a witness that he has offered violence and intimidation, both by word and bodily action. This is actionable. I shall order him into custody."

"Oh, Abel!" said Rose, "how can you speak so to Master Attorney? Do not let them take you from me. Give up the book; for my sake do it, only for my sake."

"Well," replied Abel, "for your sake, my dear young mistress, I will do it. But as for the Attorney, Cluny there, before I would give it up to him, I would——"

"Hush, hush!" said Rose, "do not speak

your heart; you will but provoke him. Give up the book quietly."

"Take it then," cried Abel; and he threw it down upon the table. "It is the Bible."

"Tindall's translation, as I live!" exclaimed Cluny, "and printed in the time of Henry the Eighth. St. Nicholas bless us! what a work was that,—what a shameless laying open of sacred mysteries to the eyes of laymen and the vulgar! Holy things should be locked up in an unknown tongue, to keep them from pollution."

"Master Attorney," said Abel bluntly, "I know nothing about the right or the wrong of it, in letting us poor men understand God's word in our mother tongue; which we never could do, so long as it was shut up in Latin. But all I do know is, that I have a fancy for that book, for I learnt some good things, and useful things too, out of it; and amongst them I was taught that the world loveth its own. And all people say, the love of the

men of the law is money. Now I have saved a little, by long service; and I'll give you a fair angel of King Edward's, if you will let me keep that book, and say nothing about the matter."

"What! what!" exclaimed Cluny, "a bribe; offer *me* a bribe! What do you take me for, pray?"

"An Attorney," said Abel; "you might have known *that*, when I offered to pay for being allowed to keep what was my own."

"And do you dare to suppose that I would take a bribe?" cried Cluny, "and have you the impudence, thus publicly, to offer it? But know, sirrah, that I scorn your insolence, and that I do all things according to law. Ralph Miller, take these keys, and Mistress Rose will conduct you; she is obliged to do it by the statute, in proceeding to search the house above stairs for the books and papers of a heretic. Go up with her



and bring down whatever you find — there now, begone !”

Miller obeyed, and Rose followed him, to conduct the catchpole into her father's chamber, where he usually studied. Cluny and Abel remained below. “ And pray, old man,” said Cluny, “ what could induce you to presume to offer me a bribe, an angel, to let you keep that book, when the catchpole was in the room? Do you know the consequence of such an offer? Do you know the statute? Do you know the penalty? Do you know what you are liable to? It comes under the statute for attempting to corrupt, suborn, and lead astray by bribes, or bribery, the officer or officers of the King's or Queen's Highnesses, in the discharge of their duties. I am a considerate man myself; but I can't answer for Ralph Miller,—he may bring an indictment against you for the offence. Something ought to be done to make him hold

his tongue. I answer for no man's discretion but my own;" and Cluny took off his trencher cap and put it down upon the table with a slap.

Allen smiled archly, and looked at him and at the cap, from out the corner of his eye; as much as to say, I see what you want.

"Had you asked me quietly and in private," continued Cluny, "just to give you the book; that is, had you asked me not to see it; why, I would have turned my back, as I do now."—The attorney turned his back towards the table.—"And as the Bible is the Bible, if it be in English, Hebrew, or Latin, why, I don't see there's flat heresy in letting a man keep a copy of it, if he asks it of me as a favour. But, fie upon it! not by offering bribes, and to an officer of the law, and before his own catchpole; fie, fie!"—(Cluny put his hand behind him and shuffled his cap that lay upon the table:)—"and Ralph Miller, as I said before, may bring an indictment, unless I give the fellow an angel to make him drink a cup of ale and forget the

circumstance : and I have a feeling of pity for a faithful servant like you, and I may do something ; for I was always reckoned a merciful man, even when I was an under-secretary to the clerk of the Star-Chamber.”

“ My father was Yorkshire,” said old Abel Allen, “ though I be a Kentishman ; and your Yorkshire folk are cute enough to teach their sons the way of the world ; so I understand you, master Attorney. And don’t look round just yet ; but good luck to you with your trencher cap when you next put it on your head,”—and Abel slipped the angel under the cap as he spoke. “ And now, master Attorney, do you speak to Miller, and I ’ll now beg the book of you in charity ; for we are in *private*.”

“ Put it into your pocket,” said Cluny, “ and say nothing about it. But I really don’t know what you mean about my cap,” added Cluny, as he slipped his hand under it, secured the angel, and then clapped the cap upon his head.

The door opened, and Ralph Miller entered the room, carrying a bundle of papers, and followed by Rose, who looked extremely alarmed. "I shall now proceed," said Cluny, "to examine these papers; and, in the mean time, do you, Mistress Rose, and you, Abel Allen, collect together what you wish to remove from the house, and we will search them before we depart. Go about it quickly."

Rose again quitted the oak parlour, now followed by Abel Allen. Cluny and the catchpole commenced the examination of the papers. "The Bishop of Dover was most particular in directing me," said Miller, "to give every letter into his hands, because such things may throw some light on the connexions of this heretic, whom, as he was one of Cranmer's gang, the Bishop would make an example of, for the benefit of others."

"Assuredly," said Cluny; "the Bishop's orders shall be fulfilled. But what bundle of

letters is that you are putting into your pocket? Hand them over to me.”

“ May I do so and obey the Bishop ?” inquired Miller.

“ Undoubtedly,” answered Cluny ; “ the law gives full power to the deputy acting in the place of the principal,—ergo, I, standing here in the place of the aforesaid Bishop, for the time being, possess the authority as the Bishop. I do all things according to law—so be pleased to hand me the packet.”

“ There it is,” said Miller ; “ and as I take it, the packet must be of some consequence, for only see the indorsement on these letters : ‘ *Copy of a Correspondence between Edward Wilford and the unfortunate Sir Thomas Wyatt, beheaded for the late rebellion.* ’ ”

“ That smells of treason, Miller,” said Cluny ; “ that comes under the statute of the twenty-first of Henry the Eighth ; ‘ every person or persons holding conversation or communica-

tion, either by letters, indictments, signs, signals, or symbols, with any offender or offenders convicted, suspected, or attainted for treason, shall be held *particeps criminis* in the said offence of the said offender or offenders.' This is an unlooked-for discovery."

"It is indeed," replied Miller, "and must go to make a charge, as I take it, against the old heretic's son, Edward Wilford, now in foreign parts. I will be most particular in giving this packet to the Bishop of Dover, since he called me aside, and laid a great stress on securing all letters; so, with your leave, Master Cluny, I'll put the packet once more in my pocket."

"Better let me deliver it," replied the attorney; "these papers come under the statute against treason, and not under that for heresy. The Bishop will most likely wish to hand them over to the civil power."

"Be that as it may," answered Miller, "I found the letters, not you, master Attorney; so I

am answerable for them. And here they go into my pocket.”

“The devil take the fellow’s impudence,” muttered Cluny. And then he added aloud, “Ralph Miller, it appears to me that you have had much labour and toil in conducting this affair; and I don’t see why you should not refresh yourself with a cup of good ale. I’ll warrant we shall find it here, for I never yet knew a reformed parson but what had a larder and a buttery fit to regale a lord. These heretics are great friends to creature comforts, and put aside those holy fasts that we of the true Church observe. Call to that old fellow, Abel Allen, and bid him bring us a flagon of his best home-brewed.”

“What, Abel! Master Abel Allen!” cried Miller aloud, as he opened the door of the room, “we would desire of you to bring down some of your bundles for us to search them, and then to supply us with something

to cheer up our hearts to the work. We would crave a flagon of your best ale, and, if you have it, a slice or so of a cold capon, or any thing that may be at hand."

"What!" said Abel, as he returned to the oak parlour, "am I to see my old master's house searched and robbed before my eyes, and am I to feed the thieves that strip him? Help yourselves to what you want, as you have done already in other matters; I am no waiter on St. Nicholas's clerks; nor need I cater for an attorney, since he has a nose and a hand long enough, and ready enough to lead him to other men's goods."

"Insolent varlet!" said Cluny, "hold your peace. And don't be a fool, Abel," he added in a lower voice. "Don't you remember what I promised just now to do to make Ralph Miller hold his tongue about your indecency in offering me a bribe? have you forgot? I have tutored him. The Miller will let your sack go untolled; so begone, and bring up



the ale ; but stay, first put down that bundle you have under your arm, and we will just look at it slightly for form's sake—only for form's sake, whilst you fetch the ale.”

Abel obeyed, and went, though with evident reluctance, to get the refreshments required of him.

“ Miller,” continued Cluny, “ now the old rascal is off for the ale, lose no time in searching that bundle : so begin with this woman's gear, that I see it contains, and look that nothing escapes you.”

“ Here's a purse,” said Miller, “ in the bundle, and I see the gold shine through the network.”

“ I seize it,” cried Cluny,—“ I seize it, in the name of the Commission. Prisoners and heretics must not be allowed money to bribe, corrupt, suborn, or lead astray the King's or Queen's officers and subjects ; it is against the statute. I will put this purse into my own pocket, and render it up to the proper

authorities. I now take it by virtue of the law. These gold fish would come into a precious net, indeed, did they rest in the keeping of a heretic as baits to angle with."

"Better count over the pieces, however, Master Attorney," said Miller, "that you may know for how much you have to render an account."

"No," answered Cluny, "I'll not so much as touch the strings of the purse; and as to opening it, upon no consideration would I suffer you to do so; the law gives me the power to seize, but none, as I take it, to reckon; and, as the security of these monies is the chief point, lest they be made the instrument of sin and corruption, it were far better that they remained untouched in the hands of the law."

Cluny pocketed the money, and hearing the door open, he looked round.

"Here comes Mistress Rose," said he.—  
"Mistress Rose, be pleased to walk aside to

that window ; my duty obliges me to look to the searching of these goods before they are removed, yet the tenderness of my feelings (a very weak failing, I grant, in a man of my office) makes it painful to me that you should witness what must be a sore sight to your eyes—I would spare you all unnecessary griefs,—so be pleased to stand off whilst Miller continues the search.” And with these words, Cluny took Rose by the shoulders and fairly shoved her to the window, where he placed her with her back towards himself and his companion. He returned to the catchpole.

“ Ralph Miller,” continued Cluny in a whisper, “ thrust your hands into the pockets of these garments ; they may contain letters of consequence that the Suffragan would especially desire you to produce ;—stoop down, and examine that grogram taffeta, for it hath a huge pouch apparently well stuffed.”

The catchpole obeyed ; and whilst he did so, Cluny, who narrowly eyed him, observed the

corner of the packet of those letters he had been so desirous to possess, just peeping out from the pocket of Miller's doublet. Cluny slipped behind the catchpole's back. Rose kept her station at the window, not daring to move on account of the terror in which she held the inquisitors. Miller was busily engaged in hunting the gown of grogram taffeta as Cluny continued saying, "And you know, Ralph Miller, the consequence of securing all papers as directed by the Bishop of Dover, and more especially such as may have a reference to treasonable practices. It were better for you, Ralph Miller, did you lose your ears than one such document, either by fraud, carelessness, or inattention, since such a loss might be to the profit of others, but certainly at your own peril." And whilst he was thus speaking, the cunning Cluny, having watched his opportunity, softly and gently drew the packet of letters out of Ralph Miller's pocket, and very quickly slipped them into his own, and never once moved

from his station till the more simple and unsuspecting catchpole had finished his search.

By this time Abel had returned, bearing reluctantly a large flagon of strong ale for the refreshment of the inquisitors. Cluny knew well the weak point in Miller's character, and he now plied the catchpole with cup after cup, as fast as he could swallow them. It was the attorney's object so to muddle Ralph's brains, which at no time were of the clearest order, that he might hereafter be induced to believe he had lost the packet of letters either in the house, or when he had quitted it; the possession of those particular letters, from some cause, being necessary to Cluny himself. Cluny, it is true, sat down at the table with Miller, and affected to take a share of the ale; but he was careful only to taste the cup, and to leave nearly all the contents of the potent flagon for Ralph, who, unable to resist temptation, forgot his business past, present, and future; and, fearing the return of the Suffragan before he should get

to the bottom of his draught, made such good haste to answer Cluny's pledge, to the health of the Queen and the success of the Commission, that he was more than bewildered in his ideas, when the return of Thornton once more to the oak parlour suddenly put an end to this hasty carouse.

Thornton looked severely at Miller; and asked Cluny what was the meaning of this indulgence in his assistant, at a time when he ought to be engaged in the discharge of his duty. "Ralph Miller," replied Cluny, "is one of those persons who lack a draught to help them through their work. But (he added in a lower voice, as he looked significantly at the Suffragan) the fellow is staunch, very useful in his way; though, I grieve to say it, he never knows when he has enough; lacks discretion, Master Thornton,—lacks discretion. But we must bear with him, since he is no flincher in these necessary matters. You had better, perhaps, all things considered, send him

forward with the rest of the officers. What has your reverence done with the old heretic and the woman?"

"Shut them up in their own barn," replied Thornton, "whilst I went to see matters duly arranged for Friar John in the church. Here, Miller, do you go forward to the barn; take up your satchel; it seems well loaded. The prisoners must forthwith be conducted to Canterbury Castle." Miller took up the satchel, heavily laden with the spoils of Wilford's small library, and, making sundry lateral movements, managed to stagger out of the house, nearly knocking down Abel, whom he chanced to meet in his way to the door. Cluny also quitted the house.

Rose, who was in the oak parlour when she heard that Thornton was actually proceeding to remove her parents from the place where they had lived happily together for so many years of peace and love, wept bitterly, and begged the Suffragan to let her go to the barn,

once more to bid them farewell. But Thornton denied this request, and bade her employ the short time she had to remain in the house in collecting what things she might wish to remove for her own use. “ And for your father, Mistress Rose, he is a man,” said the Suffragan, “ that I much desire to see his own friend, and that he may return again like a stray sheep to the true flock, and spare us of the Commission the pain of inflicting a wholesome and necessary chastisement. Mistress Alice will, I dare say, get clear, upon doing penance ;—and for yourself, Mistress Rose, I have an especial kindness for you, and much pity for your youth. If you are wise, no harm shall come to you ; and I will myself take upon me the task of instructing your ignorance.”

“ I will not cumber you,” replied Rose, “ to make you, Master Thornton, the schoolmaster of so simple a maid as I am ; and I hope that I shall not easily forget what I have already



learned from my father. I would ask nothing of you but to be merciful to my parents.”

“ I will not hear any dangerous opinions from your lips, my pretty blossom !” said Thornton ; “ and as for your parents, you may do much for them with me. And I, considering you as a sister in much danger of straying into the path of perdition, I will take upon me the charge of your spiritual welfare. So, be of good cheer, lass,” continued the Suffragan, kindly taking her by the hand ; “ and do not mar those pretty looks with sorrow ;” and he bent his head as he spoke, and somehow or other the Suffragan stooped so low that his face came in contact with Rose’s blushing lips before she was aware of it, and Thornton gave those lips a hearty kiss ; plainly showing, that however obnoxious the kiss of a heretic might appear to him in others, he had no objection at all to it himself, when the heretic was seen in the shape of a pretty girl. Rose blushed deeply, and started

from the Bishop of Dover, hastily exclaiming, "Do you dare"—

Thornton interrupted her: "Only the kiss of peace, my child; nothing but the kiss of peace, enjoined to the members of the true Church, when they would greet each other in sisterly or in brotherly love. And I now give it you with my benison, in the hope that it may drive out the Evil Spirit, so that you may come back to the fold of his Holiness's flock—And so, at present, farewell! and I will not lose sight of you in the desire to do you good, my pretty Rose in the midst of thorns."

The Suffragan patted the damsel on the cheek as he spoke, and, quitting the room, set forward to conduct his prisoners towards Canterbury.

## CHAPTER III.

WHEN Thornton proceeded to join Cluny and his attendants, in order to convey Wilford and Alice from the barn, where they had been held in custody for some time, he found, to his surprise, that the barn was already surrounded by a crowd of people, who so pressed upon the officers standing as a guard over the prisoners within, that it was with considerable difficulty they could be kept back. The news of what was going forward had been eagerly conveyed by a female servant of Alice to one or two of her gossips in the immediate vicinity of the Parsonage House; and these gossips had lost no time in running down to the village to spread abroad the dismal tidings of

the removal of their beloved Pastor from his people.

The alarm spread like wildfire; and, in a few minutes, there was scarcely a farm-house, or a cottage, but had sent forth its inmates to bewail the fate of Wilford; to see him, if possible, before he was conveyed to prison, to curse his oppressors, and, had it been practicable, to have rescued their good father (for so they termed Owen) from the clutches of his enemies. Men, women, and children, had alike joined the throng; and no sooner did Thornton appear than the uproar became general, and a confused sound of shouts, hissings, hootings, curses, and imprecations at once burst upon his ears. "Silence these madmen," said Thornton to the officers; "do your duty, and arrest any one who shall dare to interrupt us in the discharge of ours, under her Majesty's commission. Who is it that is cursing me?"

"May it please your Reverence," said catchpole Miller, still staggering from the po-

tent effects of the ale; "may it please your Reverence, they are all cursing you."

"Bring out the prisoners," said Thornton, "and set on for Canterbury this moment. Here be times, indeed! when the rabble and the dolt-headed mob rail against the lawful authorities. Move that fellow from the barn-door; and if he refuses to give place, take him into custody."

Wilford and Alice were brought out. The tide of public feeling was now turned for a moment into another channel; for, at the sight of Wilford, all hearts were melted into sorrow; and tears and groans burst from the assembly, as the reverend Pastor, with a composed countenance, and a meek and unresisting air, appeared before his parishioners in the hands of his hard-hearted enemies, like a lamb led by butchers to the slaughter. Alice also seemed more composed than when she quitted the house. But no sooner did she witness the general feeling of sympathy excited by her

condition, than her fortitude forsook her, and she burst into tears as she spoke a few words of farewell to the inhabitants of the village, who could get near enough to bid her an affectionate adieu.

Thornton, who now earnestly desired to hasten the removal of the prisoners, again ordered his officers to set forward, charging them to secure any one of the mob who should distinguish himself in the uproar, since it was impossible, at present, to wreak his vengeance on the whole body now assembled. But so great was the burst of popular indignation, that neither the authority of Thornton, nor the threats of his officers, could keep them within bounds.

“ I wish,” said Thornton to Cluny, who walked by his side, “ that we had brought a body of her Grace’s guards to assist us in conveying the prisoner ; the town bill-men are scarcely sufficient ; but I did not expect such a scene as this.”

“ It would have been as well,” replied Cluny, “ since the military power, by virtue of the late proclamation, may be called in to assist the ecclesiastical. This uproar is punishable even by the statute.”

“ Let us tear him from them,” cried a loud voice amongst the crowd ; “ don’t let that fire-and-faggot fellow burn our old Pastor for the sake of the devil and the Pope.”— “ Knock them down ! hang up the Attorney ; and let Thornton swing upon his wooden god, and see if a gilt figure will deliver him,” exclaimed another.”— “ Oh, Wilford ! Wilford ! our dear Pastor, our good father, our friend, our benefactor, must we lose you ? ”— “ Down with tyrants and tyranny ! ” These, and a thousand other like expressions, resounded on all sides, as the Bishop of Dover and his officers proceeded, as fast as the throng would let them, to convey the prisoners down the village street. As they passed along, an aged and decrepit woman, whose infirmities had

prevented her quitting her cottage, stood leaning upon a broom, with which she had been sweeping the little entry before her door. A youth, about twelve years old, was stationed near her, in the open pathway; and though he seemed, by the expression of his countenance, to partake in the general feeling, yet the fixed and unaltered position of his head, that was bent down on his bosom, showed that he was incapable of observing passing objects. "Why does not that youngster draw back, and make way for the Bishop?" said Cluny to an officer; "the obstruction is contumacious and impudent. Move out of the way, boy; don't you see, the most worshipful Suffragan of Dover is coming?"

"No," replied the boy; "I am blind. But granny wishes me to beg the good father's blessing as he passes along."

"Thou hast it, my child, — thou hast it," said Thornton; and, with an assumed air of



sanctity, he laid his hand upon the head of the blind boy as he spoke.

“Not thy blessing, Thornton!” exclaimed the old woman, who saw the action and heard what passed. “Not the blessing of a mass-monger, and an idol-worshipper, and a blood-spiller, like thee. It is not *thy* blessing that I would seek for my Tommy. Take off that bloody hand from my boy’s head; take it off, I say; for thy god is as blind as my poor grandson’s eyes; and he is deaf too,—deaf as the god of the priests of Baal: for if you cry to him from morn till eventide, he will not hear you. Perchance he sleepeth! But the true God shall hear you, and He shall wake up to crush you and your cruel company.”

“Who is that decrepit old wretch,” inquired Thornton, “that bawls like a mad woman at her Majesty’s Commission?”

“It is Gammer Plaise,” said a stander-by. “She be the village potecary and midwife,

and cures cows as well as children, if they be sick.”

“She has an evil eye, I suspect,” said Thornton.

“If she has, she comes under the statute of the 33rd of Henry VIII.” cried Cluny, “against witches and witchcraft. Only see what a bent back she has—a sure sign that she has long been ridden by the devil: and her nose and chin, that almost meet, look as if she could use them like hooks, to hold him fast by the tail. I’ll make a note of her in my book as a suspected person.”

“Do so,” said Thornton. “And are you, my lad, a follower of that old bedlamite, your granny? Has she taught you her abominations?”

“She has taught me to love God and to obey His Commandments,” replied the blind boy, “and to obey my spiritual teachers, pastors, and masters.”

“ And whom do you call your spiritual teachers, pastors, and masters ? ” said Thornton.

“ Good Master Wilford, our father, ” answered the boy.

“ Oh ! what a foul heretic is that man, ” said Cluny, “ who leads astray a whole parish, old women, little boys, and all. And we can’t move, you see, most Reverend Suffragan, without his calling up a riot contrary to law, and in contempt of the high authority of these realms. Go back, lad ; and, if you are wise, leave that old woman, your granny, or she will bring you into trouble. ”

“ Don’t go back, Tommy, ” cried Gammer Plaise, as loud as she could shout ; “ don’t go back. Ask the good man’s blessing, or you shall want mine. Stand to the truth in the light of day, and glorify God and magnify His saints and His martyrs, though the Pope himself, with his excommunications, and his rods, and his racks, and his curses, and his priests,

and his faggots, and his fires, and his purgatory, and his devils, stood before you, and fought you with them all. Down on your knees, boy! down, and beg Master Wilford's blessing, as you value body and soul; for you were a poor, blind, orphan boy, and Master Wilford has been as a father to you. You are fatherless by the wicked, but he took you up. Down on your knees, I say, though Thornton should roast you for it, as Bonner once threatened he would do to Tomkins, in a dry pan over a slow fire, after the Spanish fashion."

The blind boy obeyed his grandmother; and, feeling about him for a moment in the crowd, he at last caught Wilford by the gown, as he stood between two officers who were conducting him along; fell on his knees before him, and, holding his hands pressed together, turned the sightless balls of his eyes up to heaven, as he raised his head and said, "Dear Master Wilford, bless me before you go to prison; and if

a poor child's prayer can do you good, these wicked people sha'n't keep you long from us."

"God bless you, my poor child!" said Wilford; "be a good boy, mind your duty to God and man, be a comfort to your grandmother in her old age, and, though God has been pleased to deprive you of the light of this world, He shall more than recompense you by that light of His blessed Spirit, before which there is no darkness. And remember, Tommy, to be peaceful, and to obey the lawful authorities, for *His* sake who has given them the power."

"Get up, boy,—get up!" cried Thornton; "you stop our progress. Get up this minute!"

"Stand out of the way, child!" said Cluny, "or your back shall feel my walking staff, for your insolence to the Bishop of Dover, in obstructing his progress. I shall be borne out by the law, if I strike you in assisting his Reverence."

"Don't touch the child!" exclaimed old Gam-

mer Plaise,—“ don't touch so much as a hair of his head ; for if you do, Master Attorney, I'll knock out your brains with my broom, with as little remorse as ever you showed to ruin the most wronged man that came to you in his need. I know you, Thomas Cluny ; I remember you before Bonner and Thornton took you up out of the dirt, to put their own dirty work upon you. I remember you when you stood in the stocks for picking a lock in the good Widow Littlewit's house at Canterbury, and all the boys spattered you with rotten eggs, and every old wife shook her mop at you, and you slunk after the constable's heels like a beaten dog that hangs down his tail and ears.”

Whilst old Gammer Plaise bawled out this address as loud and as fast as she could, in order to expose the attorney in the eyes of the villagers, Cluny, to show his own contempt of her assertions, and his authority, gave the poor blind boy a hearty cuff, because he did not get fast enough out of the way. Gammer Plaise

lifted up her broom, and would have made good her threats, could her old limbs have kept pace with her intentions ; but her feeble arm, unable to manage her weapon, let it fall, and Cluny escaped with no other punishment than a hoot from the populace, with cries of “ Shame, shame ! to strike the poor blind child.”

“ No shame at all,” said Thornton ; “ my Secretary acts under the Commission, and has a right to use personal force, if persuasion will not avail in the execution of his duty ; and that little heretic has shown himself such, by begging a blessing of a man so arrested and accused as the prisoner. Good people, stand back, and cease this uproar, and let us pass in peace.”

Gammer Plaise now raised her broom at the Suffragan himself. “ What !” she cried, “ do you, Thornton, encourage that dirty fellow that hangs at your skirts, to beat my Tommy ? but this is but a small thing compared to what you do to yonder good man. You take from us our minister, our friend, our comfort. But hark

you, Thornton! you called me a witch just now, because I am old and broken down with sorrow, and labour, and care, to see these times. But, witch or no witch, I will be to you a prophet of evil for the deed you do this day."

Thornton was about to interrupt her. "Let her go on," said Cluny; "she shook her broom at me just now, as witches are wont to do; that's something worthy noting. Let her say her say,—it will be evidence against her, and I am a witness."

"Hark you, Thornton!" continued the old woman; "you, and your fellows in blood, Bonner, and the rest of you, burnt, at Smithfield, my only son, the father of yonder poor blind lad. You first apprehended him, forsooth, because he was a bargeman to the Lady Jane Dudley; and you burnt my son, between you, for a heretic and a traitor. But I live to curse you for the deed. I live to tell you, Thornton, that the blood of saints and martyrs shall rise up against you at the day of doom. That



you and your Queen Jezebel, who now seats herself in high places, and sends out her people, saying, "Slay me this man, and burn me that, that I may make a sacrifice of a precious odour, to do incense to the Beast in his scarlets at Rome; she, I tell you, shall fall; her reign and yours shall be shortened. Ye shall triumph for a while; ye shall slay, and revel, and delight ye in the blood of God's people, till God has proved His own; but then ye shall fall, like the rebellious Spirit, never to rise again; and men shall say of her, 'Take this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter.' And death shall call you hence, like a thief in the night, that slays the man of the house, when he thought the doors were made fast against him."

"High treason!" said Cluny: "she imagines the Queen's death. Shall I take her into custody now, or deal with her hereafter?"

"Not now," answered Thornton; "it will but add to the uproar. Note down her words,

and you can send the billmen from the Castle to apprehend her at your leisure.”

“Thornton,” said Wilford mildly, for he saw to what danger the vehemence of Gammer Plaise would expose her, “show mercy to that poor old woman. Her son was burnt at Smithfield; and whenever any circumstance brings that sad pass to her mind, she is half beside herself.”

“She is a pretty sample of your flock, Master Wilford,” replied Thornton: “do you suffer your parishioners thus to utter treason, and stir up strife, and rail against the Queen’s Highness, in the public streets? Wilford, Wilford, this woman’s conduct were alone sufficient to condemn you. You have badly filled your station, and I fear you are a naughty pretender to the truth of lawful supremacy and sway.”

“So far from it, Master Thornton,” answered Wilford, “that it was not longer ago than last Sunday, that I discoursed to my parishioners a homily of my own composition, on the text of

obedience to the powers that be ; as these good people will bear me witness." Wilford turned towards some of the inhabitants as he spoke ; but the crowd was now too much moved calmly to listen to any appeal. The circumstance of Cluny striking the blind boy, the imprecations, and violent discourse of Gammer Plaise, had all helped to stir them up to a feeling of irritation and wrath, that amounted almost to madness. Some struck the officers, others ventured even to assault the Bishop ; and so great was the fury of the populace, that, had Wilford been of a more artful or daring character, in these moments of general uproar and confusion, he might have attempted, and perhaps with success, his escape. But so far was he from taking advantage of the circumstance, that he now loudly called upon his parishioners to hear him, and at length was suffered to address the people. "What ! my beloved brethren," said the good man, "is it thus you reward me for all the benefits that, under God, I have endeavoured to

bestow upon you? Will you make me believe that I have taught you your duty in vain? These men, in whose hands it has pleased Almighty Providence to place me,—these men are but the instruments of the lawful Sovereign, Mary Queen of England—a Queen, though it may be a severe one, whom God has placed over you. But she *is* your Queen and mine, and we cannot resist her authority without disobedience to his word, who has said resistance is punished with death both of body and soul. I am innocent, my dear brethren, of the things charged against me; I am a freeborn Englishman, and, as such, cannot fall but by the laws of my country. I shall be examined, tried, and heard in my defence: do not, therefore, interrupt the exercise of a power against which God himself has taught us we must not rebel. And, believe me, that, armed as I am with a clear conscience and a reliance on Heaven, I feel my heart light within me; I feel that I am going to my trial, to be proved at the bitter waters of strife, but

that my deliverer is at hand. Pray for me, nay weep for me ; but remember, I beseech you, the lessons I have so often taught you in yonder church, and do not let my sorrow be the occasion of your sin. I rebuke you now, to save you hereafter :—silence, submission, and resignation, these are things that I require at your hands, that we may not part in anger, but, as we have lived, in the bond of peace and charity.”

The serious and emphatic manner, the composed aspect, with which Wilford made this address to the assembly, sensibly affected all hearts. That violence which had before raged like the tumult of a stormy ocean, was in a moment calmed ; and tears ran fast down the poor people’s cheeks, as they begged pardon of their pastor for what they had said or done to offend him ; and sobbed out a last farewell, in voices rendered inarticulate with grief. The old invoked blessings upon his head, the women begged blessings of him for their children, the stout and the young men eagerly pressed about

him and wrung him by the hands; and children, nay almost infants, though incapable of knowing the cause of so much sorrow, nevertheless sympathized in its effects, and cried for company, as they called out "Daddy Wilford's going away—kiss us, daddy. And don't stay long, and come back again, and I won't cry if you will," said a little girl who hung upon his gown as he patted her on the head, and endeavoured to disengage himself from her tiny hand.

But neither threats, nor exhortations, nor tears, nor sorrow, could operate with old Gammer Plaise, so as to silence her tongue. She railed at Thornton, at Bonner, at Harpsfield, and at the Queen; and, as the Bishop of Dover passed her door, she once more shook her broom at him; and calling her dog, with many a hoot and hiss, endeavoured to set the animal about Thornton's heels, in the hope that it would bite him. A knot of idle boys had gathered themselves near her, to listen to her discourse,

and to stare at what was going on ; and, ever ready for mischief, they clapped their hands and encouraged the dog, which ran about Thornton, so as to avoid the blows aimed at its head by the Suffragan, who attempted to knock it down with his staff ; and barked, snarled and yelped ; whilst the boys snatched up the stones that lay about, and fairly pelted Thornton, Cluny, and their attendants, with a shower of them, as they set forward and quitted the village of Wellminster.

## CHAPTER IV.

ON the evening of that day which saw Owen Wilford removed from his house and his parishioners, in the cruel manner we have detailed in our last chapter, Rose and her faithful attendant, Abel Allen, completed their arrangements for securing such necessaries as might be found useful to Wilford, Alice, and themselves; since Thornton, something contrary to his general custom, had allowed of such things being removed. The greater part of these necessaries they bestowed for the time present in the houses of some of the villagers, who were all eager in affording assistance to the unhappy and persecuted family; whilst Rose, knowing well the poverty of her humble friends, and fear-



ing to bring them into trouble on her account, should she remain in any one of their dwellings, determined for the present to take up her lodging with an honest widow, the sister of Abel Allen, in Canterbury. There she would be near the prison of her parents; and she resolved, instead of giving way to her feelings, to make such exertions as she could to do them service; and hoped, by the daily labour of her hands, (as she had much skill with her needle,) to contribute her mite to their comforts, and to maintain herself, without being chargeable to her faithful but poor adherents.

All was now prepared. Old Abel clenched a stout oak staff, and, offering his arm to his young Mistress to support her in her walk, proposed that they should set on for Canterbury before the night closed in upon them; and Thornton had threatened them both with imprisonment, if his orders were disobeyed, or if they were found to remain in the house on the following morning. This was a trying mo-

ment for poor Rose. She had lived from childhood in the house she was now to quit for the first time in her life, and to quit too under circumstances of such deep distress. Here she had lived in innocence and happiness; here she had seen her parents dwell together in peace and love for so many years. But now, when she looked around and saw all forsaken—the image of sorrow and desolation that was presented to her view, so much overpowered her, that, desirous to compose her feelings before she set out, she excused herself to old Allen, bidding him fetch something from another part of the premises, and, saying she would rejoin him in a short time, she retired into the little garden at the back of the house, to indulge her tears unobserved, and to endeavour to regain that fortitude, she felt to be so necessary to her in this trying hour.

Not long after Rose had quitted the house, a stranger was observed to pass hastily through

the village of Wellminster, and, without stopping a moment by the way, or noticing any thing in his progress, he came directly up the pathway that led to the mansion of the pastor. The stranger was a young man, of a tall and comely person; but his features expressed a character of thoughtfulness, that bordered on melancholy. He was wrapped in a large black cloak of Geneva taffeta, and his brows were shaded by a broad-flapped hat of foreign fashion, entirely differing in form from the English close cap of the day. He had arms at his girdle, and in his hand he carried such a light staff, or riding-rod, as it was usual with gentlemen to take upon a journey.

The stranger struck upon the door of Wilford's house with his staff, but no one answered this call for admission, since old Abel Allen was busied in an out-house, where Rose had sent him to seek something, whilst she herself retired into the garden; and the other domestic,

a female servant of Alice, was employed in removing her own apparel to a neighbour's cottage.

The stranger, finding that no one came to the door, laid his hand upon the latch, raised it, and, without farther ceremony, entered the house. He then walked into the kitchen, being the first apartment that lay open before him near the entry. It was deserted, and the kitchen chimney, whose well-piled hearth is the sure indication of good cheer, hospitality, and social feeling in an English country house, now presented an appearance as cheerless as the stranger's visit. The fire was out, not even a faggot mouldering into embers lay upon the hearth. There was neither fire nor comfort to be found here ; the stranger quitted the kitchen, and went directly to the oak parlour.

The oak parlour was also empty, and he started with surprise at the appearance of general confusion still visible from the ransacking and rummaging so lately made by Cluny and

Miller. An empty flagon and a couple of tankards were seen upon the table, and a stool or two lay overturned upon the ground. A couple of large armed and carved oak chairs stood, the one on this, the other on that side the chimney. In one of these, a dog, with its nose resting upon its hind-legs, lay sleeping; but as the stranger approached, the dog started, and set up a fierce bark; in another moment, as if the animal recognised in this intruder an old acquaintance, it made one bound from the chair to the feet of the stranger, and leaped and danced about him,—now jumping so high as almost to reach his shoulder,—again, bending its head and stretching out its fore-paws, came fawning and crouching before him, and whined with impatience to be noticed and greeted in his turn.

“Poor Pincher!” said the stranger, as he patted the animal upon the head; “poor Pincher! it is many a long day since we met, but you have not forgot me; and there is, I

see, no friend, save yourself, to welcome me here."

The alarm that had been given by the dog reached the ears of old Abel Allen as he was coming towards the kitchen, and whilst the stranger was in the act of returning the caresses of the dog, Allen stood before him. The stranger and the serving-man looked at each other in silence for a moment. The latter lifted up his hands and eyes, and at length so far recovered from his surprise as to exclaim, " Good God ! is it you ?"

" Yes," answered the stranger, " I believe I am still myself, though many things have happened that might have changed the nature of a better man since we last parted. But what means all this ?" he continued, as he glanced his eye around, and pointed with his hand to the confusion of the room ; " what does it mean ? For God's sake, tell me, though I fear to ask it,—where is my father ? How fares my mother ? and where is Rose ?"

Abel shook his head, and wringing the stranger by the hand, he said, "Don't ask me, don't ask me. I'll tell you all anon. But oh, my young master! my dear master Edward! what made you come back again in such times as these? Why did you not mind your father's counsel, and stay where you were? You can do him no good here, but only bring him into more trouble."

"I do not know what you mean," replied Edward; "but I can no longer endure this suspense. Tell me the worst at once; what has happened? Where are my parents?"

Abel remained silent. He hung down his head; he looked up, and wiped his eyes.

"Tell me, for God's sake!" repeated Edward Wilford: "I can bear to hear it; indeed, I can;—I can bear any thing but this suspense."

"Your father is in prison," said old Abel: and he turned aside his head, as if he would not witness the expression of the unhappy son's feelings at hearing such intelligence.

Edward turned as pale as death. "In prison!" he exclaimed; "where?—for what?"

"Thornton fetched him from us but this day," continued Abel; "so you may know all the rest without my speaking another word."

"Thornton! Thornton!" repeated Edward Wilford, in great agitation; "Oh God! is *that* man my father's keeper? then he must fall,—but I will bear it.—Go on, Abel; tell me the rest—you see I bear it; you see I do: I have not shed a tear." And Edward paced the room distractedly as he spoke, whilst his lips quivered and his bosom heaved in tumultuous agitation. "Where is my mother?—tell me, where is my poor old mother?"

"That devil, Thornton," said Abel—and he struck his hand upon the table—"has taken her up for a harlot, and she is had to prison too."

"It is a lie!" exclaimed Edward—and the blood rushed into his face in a torrent as he spoke,—“she is my father's chaste and honour-



able wife. Dares the villain thus assail the honour of my mother's name?"

"Ay, and he gives foul names to you and to your sister too," continued Allen: "he as good as said you were born *legitimate*, or some such Latin word, that the priests use when they mean to make out an honest man's children to be no better than bastards."

Wilford, fired at hearing this, and clasping with his hand the haft of the short sword, or dagger, that he wore at his side, exclaimed in a tone of voice rendered deep and impetuous by passion—"I will seek out Thornton, and if he is a man he shall answer this to me!"

Abel went up to him, and laid his hands upon his shoulders, and endeavoured to soothe his young master as he said, "Don't now! don't be rash! Thornton is a priest, and there is no making him fight, you know; for the Pope has given him a shaven crown, and the devil shelters him under the hood that covers it. And

think, into what trouble you would bring yourself, only to talk of fighting such a man. Dear Master Edward, think of your poor father and mother; it may be, you may do them some good; but, sure, it would be wicked to make them more unhappy than they are just now. And besides, think of your sister, Mistress Rose, an innocent young thing as she is, and no father to care about her, nor mother now to look after her, and nobody but you and me to comfort her. Do be chary of yourself, if it is only for the sake of your sister."

"Well, well," said Edward Wilford, "I will try to govern my feelings. I will be prudent. But when I hear Thornton's name, when I recollect all that he *has* done already, and may do hereafter, I am ready to burst with indignation at the thought of his villany. And where is my sister? But I need not ask; I suppose she shares in the common fate, and is in prison too."

"No, she is not; she is not, dear Master Edward," replied Allen; "she bears up her

heart better than you do. She is just stepped into the garden, and I'll go to her, and say that you are here, that you may not startle her as you did me just now, to see you come home so sudden, when we all thought you were at Frankfort. And do take a sample of her; for somehow or other, Master Edward, I don't know how it is, but you young men catch fire and speak hot words, and often kill each other in your quarrels; but women, though they cry oftener than we do, yet, after all, they bear up trouble with more patience and more heart than half of us men do. So I'll go and call Mistress Rose to you;—and do pluck up your spirits, and don't look so sad when she comes."

Whilst Allen made this speech, Wilford stood fixed in thought, with his hand resting upon the back of a chair. He did not answer the old servant, but motioned him with his hand to go and do as he intended.

In a short time Allen returned, accompanied by his young mistress. Rose flew towards her

brother, and in a moment they were locked in each other's arms. "My dear Edward," said she, "how glad I am to see you!—but how sorry I am you come at such a time as this!" And she wept, and kissed, and welcomed her brother by turns.

"And you, my dear sister, how glad I am indeed to see you!" said Edward; "and how you are grown, Rose! you are quite a woman now! But oh, my dear Rose! this is a sad, sad home to come to! Think of our parents. How shall I bear to meet them!"

"I do indeed think of them," replied Rose, "but I try to think what I may do for them; and it seems to me, my dear brother, that the best thing children can do for their parents in the hour of their trouble, is to comfort them, and for their sakes to hide, if they can, those feelings that will but add a fresh weight of sorrow to the burthen already laid upon them."

"You are right, Rose,—quite right," said Edward; "you teach me what I ought to do; I

will try to practise your lesson. But, tell me, how came this sad chance upon my father? For I conclude, by Thornton's taking him away, that he is accused of heresy."

"Ay, God help us! he is indeed," answered Rose. "I can tell you very little of the matter as it happened, though I am not without my own thoughts as to the cause of his arrest, but I would not tell my father; for you know how angry he used to be with me for suspicion, and would chide me if I spoke my mind when it was unfavourable to another."

"I know, Rose," said Wilford, "that before I left England you showed some disposition to a freedom of remark on the character of others that our good father deemed uncharitable, and he took pains to crush the vice he feared in you, before it had gained strength by indulgence."

"I hope I am not uncharitable, brother," replied Rose, "in the present instance. But I am sure, whatever I may think of our cousin,

Sir Francis Morgan, that his own behaviour will justify my worst thoughts; and I cannot help suspecting that Morgan is our father's enemy, and has been the stirrer of all this mischief."

"Tell me, what makes you think so?" inquired Wilford impatiently. "I know enough, too much of Morgan already," he added as he sighed deeply. "But what interest could he have in harming our father, especially as, you know, he is nephew to our mother, her late sister's only son?"

"Morgan has never been near us," answered Rose, "since you left England. But, on the Sabbath before the last, I saw him in the church, when our father preached against the worshipping of popish idols, and the uselessness of prayers for the dead, and other points of the Romish doctrine. I am sure that I saw Sir Francis Morgan making notes of the discourse. And did you ever know him make notes of

a sermon,—nay, did you ever know him go to hear a sermon for any good purpose ?”

“ You conclude then,” said Wilford, “ that it is Morgan who has stirred on Thornton to act against our father as he has done ?”

“ I do think he may have helped to do it,” replied Rose ; “ though my father says Thornton has been his enemy ever since they lived together with Cranmer as his secretaries, when my father found out that Thornton had betrayed his master.”

“ I knew Morgan to be wild, extravagant, and selfish,” said Wilford ; “ but I never yet suspected him of being a bigot. Indeed, I thought he was of no religion, but conformed for his own safety to any worship of the times, without troubling himself about the faith of others. I cannot, therefore, see what good it could do him to hurt our father.”

“ Well, I may be mistaken,” said Rose ; “ but now tell me, why have you left Frank-

fort, when, not long since, my father wrote to bid you remain there for your own safety?"

"Did he so?" exclaimed Edward: "I have never received his letter. I cannot now enter into a full detail of particulars; but you know, I believe, that I have acted under letters of permission from the Emperor to pass and re-pass the seas. My own object, in making use of this permission, was to assist Master Boyer, of London, in his mercantile transactions. I did so; but, at the same time, I undertook the charge, hazardous enough had I been discovered, of conveying the bounty of the merchants of London, who in their hearts are of the reformed faith, to their suffering brothers, the exiles of Frankfort. A sad dissension has broken out amongst them on points of the liturgy. Calvin and Knox are at variance. And Dr. Cox, the tutor of the late King Edward, arrived also as an exile at Frankfort; and there standing up for the liturgy, as it was read in our churches in the reign of his royal pupil,



he gave offence to Knox. I grieve to say it, but our Church at Frankfort divided itself into parties; and those of the Doctor's party banished Knox the Scot, on an absurd charge — that a book he wrote many years past was traitorous to the Emperor."

"My father will grieve to hear of these divisions," said Rose, "since he thinks that now, more than ever, the Reformed Church should be united in itself:—but go on."

"In short," continued Edward, "what with party spirit and dissensions, many of our exiles lost their foreign friends; and they are now in such want and affliction, that I offered to risk a journey into England, as well to obtain for them money and supplies, as to gain my father's opinion on some points of their disputes, in the hope to make peace; for they hold his instructions in great estimation, knowing him to have been the friend of Cranmer, and once a pastor at Frankfort. This is the cause of my once more putting my foot on

English ground, for I had hoped never again to return.”

“What can you mean by that, brother?” said Rose. “It is a most unkind speech. Surely, foreign parts and foreign friends cannot have made you so soon forget father, mother, sister, and country, that you should say you had hoped never to see them more.”

“Forgive me, Rose,” replied Edward; “I— I did not mean that. Forget you! do you think, Rose, that I *could* forget my home and my family? God knows how I have remembered you all; how I have prayed for you, and that I might but once more see you all in England safe and happy, and secure in better times; and then I could have laid my head in my grave, and bid farewell to this world for ever! I have had many, many bitter remembrances of you all.”

• “Of us who love you so, Edward?” said Rose; “but I will not reproach you for saying so, because I see how it is. You are half heart-

broken by these times. And then, to come home worn with toil and travel, and to find such a chance as this is to welcome you,—it is enough to make you say hasty and unkind words. So, kiss me, my dear brother, and do try to take comfort.”

Wilford looked stedfastly in his sister's face, and kissed her with an affection the most sincere. “ You are a dear girl, Rose,” he said ; “ and I am a brother unworthy of you. I have not half requited your tenderness as it deserves. But I will be a brother, Rose ; I will be kinder for the future ;” and again he pressed her to his embrace.

Old Abel wiped his eyes ; for, though he had been in the room during this discourse, he had respectfully forborne to interrupt it. “ It glads my old heart to see this,” said the faithful creature. “ Oh, it is a blessed thing to live together in brotherly love. My children,” continued he, as he came up to them and took the hand of each, “ do not think a

poor man too free, if he gives you counsel. I have seen the birth of you both. I remember you, Master Edward, when you were a stout cherry-cheeked boy, as gamesome as a young lamb; and you would follow after Abel Allen, and get him to play with you at blind hob half the live-long day. And you, Mistress Rose, were of a less frolicsome mood. You loved, when you were a little girl scarce a hand high,—you loved to sit on my knee and to hear me tell you old tales about the things I had seen when I was young, and specially about the coronation of the Lady Ann Boleyn; and you would then dress you up in your mother's paafts and frows, and would play Lady Ann about the house like a little queen. But you wept when I told you of her sore fate; and I loved you for being a tender-hearted child."

These reminiscences of former days, for a moment, led old Abel from the theme of his discourse; else he was not very garrulous at

any time. However, he returned to his subject. "I love to call up past days," said Abel, "because I think we should do so when they have been happy ones; and to thank God for them in those seasons when He pleases to give us darker hours. But what I would say is this, my children:—There are but two of you, brother and sister,—you are babes of the same parents. You have hung at the same breast, when you were as poor and as helpless as a bird just fledged. I have seen you sleeping together, fast locked in each other's arms when you were infants; and God's angels stood and kept watch by your bed. You have knelt and prayed together in the same faith; you have a father common to you both.—Have then but one interest—one heart. Be true, kind, and comfortable to one another, in the day of your trouble; and the blessing of that God, who delights in the love of His servants, shall be upon you both."

The brother and sister were both sensibly

affected at this feeling admonition from their old and faithful servant ; and they both assured him, they would never forget his instructions. Rose, whose eyes had scarcely wandered from her brother since he came into the house, now remarked, that she thought he was altered a good deal since he had last left England. “ You are much browner in the face than you used to be, Edward,” said she, “ though I do not mind that ; but you have lost your colour, and you have such a sad fixed look, that it seems as if it were habitual to you, and not alone owing to what has so lately happened.”

Wilford pleaded fatigue and anxiety of mind.

“ I will get you some refreshment ; I’ll go and tap the fresh cask of ale,” said Abel Allen, “ and I hope you will drink as much as you can, for it would be a pity to leave it all, as we must do, for that Spanish friar, John de Willa Garcina, as they call him, to guzzle and drink healths to the Pope in it.”

“ What ! Friar John de Villa Garcina !” ex-

claimed Edward; "is he to succeed my father here in Wellminster?"

"He is to do so for the time being," replied Rose.

"He is one of the most artful of all the Jesuits," said Wilford, "that King Philip brought over with him from Spain: and he it was who was set upon Cranmer to make him sign his recantation. Must he succeed our father?"

Rose sighed as she answered "Yes." Abel Allen returned with some refreshment for his young master. "I have tasted nothing since I came on shore at Dover," said Edward; "I would not rest a moment on the road, so anxious was I to reach home. I left my horse in Canterbury, that I might come hither in private, by crossing the fields. I have reached what I hoped to find my home; but, alas! how do I find it!"

Rose and Allen were silent; and, observing the pale and sad looks of Edward Wil-

ford, they pressed him to take food and drink. He partook but slightly of either. "Why, you have hardly tasted the ale," said Abel, "and I thought you would have liked it; for I brewed it myself, not thinking it would come to a Spanish friar's mouth. But so it is; we labour and toil, and, as the Scripture says, lay up goods, but know not who shall gather them. Do taste another cup."

"No, no more," replied Wilford; "I have no appetite—I have no relish for it. I am quite out of heart." And, rising from his seat, Edward paced the room, till, coming near the door, he stood still, and looking with fixed attention at the arm-chair by the chimney-side, he burst into a flood of tears.

"Don't look at that," said Allen; "I see what you are thinking of."

"And there," said Wilford, pointing to the chair,—“there he used to sit: I think I see him now, with his venerable white hairs and his mild and manly face, as he would sit and



read the Bible to us, Rose. And now I look and find but his empty place. God give me patience!—This is too much.”

“Don’t, don’t talk so,” said old Abel. “You have set Mistress Rose a-crying. Come, we must go at last. So, do let us think of leaving the house.”

“Leave the house!” exclaimed Wilford. “Must my sister be turned out of our father’s house?”

“You forget,” replied Rose, “that I told you Friar John de Villa Garcina is to take possession of the cure; and this, you know, is but the house appointed for the parish minister.”

“True, true,” said Wilford; “I remember it too well: and where are you going, Rose? where will you find a home?”

“God will not forsake me, brother,” answered Rose cheerfully; “though I grant it is a heavy pass for me. I have no friends of any consequence in this neighbourhood, and I fear

to bring my poor ones into trouble on my account; so I intend to lodge me for the present with good Widow Littlewit, this honest man's sister; and perhaps, Edward, she may have a bed to spare for you; for since she has been a poor widow, she chiefly lives by what she can make of her lodgings."

"I will warrant she will find a bed for Master Edward," said Abel Allen; "and I don't know where I am to rest; but I and Pincher will find a bed somewhere. We are both old servants of the family, and we will neither of us stay behind to serve a Spanish friar, nor desert our masters in their distress; and Pincher, I am sure, is no friend to the Pope or the devil, but as faithful a dog as ever wagged a tail." Pincher seemed conscious of the eulogium Abel bestowed upon him, since he looked up in his master's face, and wagged his tail, as if he assented to the proposition.

Edward Wilford now summoned up all his

fortitude, and prepared to conduct his sister to Canterbury. "I will see my father; I will see him to-night: so, be of good cheer, Rose, and let us trust in God, and endeavour to practise the duty of submission."

"I am glad to hear you say so," said Rose; "for I am sure, Edward, that our father always taught us that the passive virtues (of all other virtues the most useful in life), when they are founded on humility, were the most acceptable to Heaven."

"You may not see your father to-night, my dear young master," said Abel; "for by the time we reach Canterbury it will be dark, and past the hour for opening the Castle gates. In the morning you may see him."

"Well, then," replied Edward, "I must be patient, and wait till morning comes.—Abel," continued Wilford, as they were leaving the house, "do not let us pass through the village, in our way to the high-road; I am too much

disordered to meet my father's old parishioners this evening, and, being with Rose and you, I shall certainly be recognised."

"We will take the short cut, then," said Abel Allen, "and go down the green lane, and so through Sir Richard Southwell's wood, and that will bring us out near the main road to Canterbury."

"Must we go *that way*?" inquired Wilford; "I thought there used to be another path over the common?"

"Ay, but that way is enclosed now," said Abel, "since the great alterations that have been made here, now Sir Richard is come to live at home, and doesn't go staying abroad for years at a time, as he used to do in the late King's days. So we must go through Sir Richard Southwell's property."

"Does Sir Richard Southwell constantly live here now?" inquired Wilford. "Is he well? and—and is his family all well?"

“ They are all well,” replied Abel, “ and Lady Southwell is dead.”

“ Dead !” exclaimed Wilford ; “ Lady Southwell dead—dead—I—I am much grieved to hear it. When did she die ? when did it happen ?—Was she here, or in London ? Is Sir Richard here now ?”

“ Bless my heart, Master Edward,” said Abel, “ I can’t answer such a number of questions in a minute ; and I don’t know much about the matter. All I know is, that Lady Southwell died at Wellminster-hall about a year ago ; that Sir Richard took on, people said, very much about it, but comforted his heart by paying a score of priests to sing for her soul every day : that ever since her death, a Spanish friar lives in his house, to keep up his spirits, as I suppose ; and Sir Richard is sometimes at Whitehall along with the Queen, and sometimes here in the country, and that’s all we know about them. But, bless me ! dear

Master Edward, only to see, now, how travel and strange parts make a man forget himself. Why, you said just now that you did not wish to go through the village; and, see, if you be not turning down the very path that leads to it.”

“I had forgot,” said Wilford; “do you lead on:—Come, Rose, take my arm; why do you stop?”

“Only to pluck a flower from this rose-bush,” replied his sister; “my poor mother planted the tree with her own hand. What a changed place will this be!” and a tear stole down the cheek of Rose as she spoke. “I believe I am very fond and foolish,” added she; “but, notwithstanding all our troubles, I cannot leave the old house, and the garden, and all these inanimate things, without feeling as if I loved them more now that I part from them, perhaps for ever, brother; and it may be I shall never more see such happy days as I have known here.”

“ Dear young mistress,” said Abel, “ a man’s happiness, and, I take it, a woman’s also, lies most in his own breast ; and God can make any place a temple for His blessed Spirit. So, don’t think happiness depends so much upon place ; for it’s all in the heart. Though, I grant, there is not a better spot for grazing sheep and breeding cattle in all the county than Wellminster ; and we grew our own hops too, from which I brewed the ale. But God’s will be done ! He gave those blessings, and He takes them away,—for sheep, cattle, hops, and ale, are all His,—and who shall say Him nay ?”

Rose assented to this sound reasoning of poor old Allen ; and, taking her brother by the arm, the little party set forward to Canterbury. Abel Allen led the van, armed with a strong oaken staff, from which depended a bundle of necessaries, as he carried it over his shoulder ; and Pincher followed close at his heels, as the guardian, friend, and companion of the trusty servant.

The evening drew on apace; and, long before they reached the city of Canterbury, the high tower of its beautiful cathedral, its massive walls and many turrets were silvered by the moon, that rode tranquilly through the heavens, as she shed her light upon this lower world, undisturbed by the passions of men, and still proclaiming in her course the power, the wonder, and the glory of that God, who, excellent in all the works of His creation, is alone represented cruel and unrelenting by the bigotry and superstition of man.



## CHAPTER V.

WE must now return to the elder Wilford, whom, it must be remembered, in the chapter before the last, we left under the guidance of Thornton, Cluny, and the attendants of the Commission, on his way to prison, on a charge of heresy. Thornton, who was already sufficiently satisfied with the share of odium and abuse he had incurred in the village for being the instrument of Wilford's accusation, had no mind to try how he might be received in the same capacity by the populace of Canterbury; since, however retired Wilford had lived, his cure was too near that city to allow the worth of his character to be unknown to many of the inhabitants; and his having once

been a favoured secretary with Archbishop Cranmer, was a circumstance that had of late contributed to interest many persons in his behalf. These considerations, therefore, induced Thornton, who (like most persons that commit acts of cruelty) was very chary of his own safety, to leave Wilford before he reached the city gates; and, having charged Cluny to see the prisoner safely deposited in the appointed place, the worthy Suffragan, it was said, hastened home, as fast as he could, to solace himself over the luxuries of a well-spread table, and, as he drank his goblet of wine, to devise new schemes for the glory of the Queen, by the extirpation of heresy within her realms.

Canterbury Castle, to which Wilford was to be conducted, (and of which, perhaps, at the present time scarcely a vestige remains,) was a stately pile of Norman construction. Many a siege had assailed its massive and weather-beaten walls in vain. At the period of our

narrative, though some of the outer barriers bore evidence of these contests, and looked, hung about with their mantle of ivy, as if the period of their decay was not far distant; yet the inner-court, the towers, and the keep, still reared their heads in defiance, like giants in strength, threatening terror to whomsoever might become their assailants. The gateway was perfect, defended on either side by a flanking round tower of ponderous construction, with many a narrow window, and many a hollow loop-hole in its sides, like the eyes of Death, and whence he had often launched the arrows of destruction. These towers had stood the test of ages: they had witnessed the changes of governments, of laws, of religion, and of generations. And, whilst time had long since numbered the men of their days with the "years beyond the flood," they still rose to the view in solemn grandeur, like the character of their hardy founders in the pages that record their deeds.

The great oaken gates, thickly studded with nails, were closed, nor did they now open to give entrance to the prisoner; but a small door, cut within the gates, and called the wicket, was unbolted, unlocked, and unbarred, to admit Cluny and his charge. Wilford passed through the wicket with a firm step, and now found himself beneath the huge dark archway that formed the interior of the gateway. Here he was met by the keeper of the prison,—a man who was the terror, the rod, and the theme of malediction to every unfortunate wretch placed within his dominion of cruelty and death.

This man was a tall, raw-boned fellow, of a stern and ruthless countenance. He had been appointed to his situation in consequence of the fierce bigotry of his character; and he joyed to see a heretic come within his power. His person altogether presented whatever the imagination of the timid sufferer could picture to itself as most terrible; and he rivalled even William Alexander himself, the famous keeper of New-

gate in Mary's days, and seemed to vie with him which should prove most unrelenting,—the savage master of the metropolitan prison, or that of Canterbury Castle.

The keeper looked at Wilford for a moment, in order to become perfectly well acquainted with his features; and seeing, by the habit that the good pastor wore, he was a churchman, the fellow gave a sneer, but expressed no surprise, and appeared in a moment to comprehend the whole affair. He did not deign to ask so much as a single question respecting his prisoner, but simply demanded of Cluny the warrant of committal.

“That shall be tendered anon,” said Cluny; “in the mean time, do you, Master Keeper, please to suffer me to speak to you apart, since I have that for your private ear which may not be spoken here.”

The keeper motioned Cluny to follow him into a small apartment in the tower of the gateway; and, for the present, Wilford and Alice

were conducted by the billmen into the inner court, or open space of the Castle, surrounded by high walls and massive towers. Here the prisoners were suffered to breathe the air during certain hours of the day, and it was now the time for this indulgence. Upon entering the inner court, a strange and mixed scene presented itself to Wilford. There was an assembly of persons apparently of all orders and grades in society. Some were the victims of guilt, others of tyranny. Here might be seen the squalid, ragged, and the miserable; the cut-purse, the midnight burglar, the cheat, the maker of false monies, the beggar, and the common thief.

Many appeared wholly senseless or indifferent to their condition; others seemed to brave it out, and to rejoice in the very acts or *talents* that had consigned them to a prison. A few of the poor debtors were busily employed in such little occupations as they could here follow, in the hope to gain a trifle to better their condi-

tion ; whilst some of the idle and vicious part of their fellow-prisoners, from mere wantonness, endeavoured, by sundry tricks and annoyances, to interrupt the progress of their work. In one part of the court-yard four or five men were amusing themselves in the game of jumping or leaping at the ring, accompanying their amusement with loud shouts and exclamations, according to the success or failure of the jumper. Another group of savage-looking fellows had collected themselves together, and were drawing straws for the cost of a flagon of beer.

In one corner, something apart from the rest, sat two persons of an extraordinary appearance, who amused themselves with playing a game at cards, that seemed deeply to interest them both. The younger player, in his dress exhibited a mixture of threadbare finery and dirty indigence. The gold lace that faced his doublet was tarnished, and the velvet of his cloak faded and worn ; many a point was broken, and his hose showed the skin of the wearer through

more than one hole. But the beard, cut and knotted into two formal peaks, with a small velvet cap, from which depended a broken plume, set shantly on one side of the head, proclaimed an affectation of the fashion of Whitehall.

This sorry and broken-down beau of his day, was engaged in play with an old fellow, whose beard, white, long, and flowing, would have seemed venerable, but for the shrewd and knavish cast of the features to which it belonged. The old man was dressed in a large black gown, his middle girt about with a broad leather belt, from which depended a rosary and a cross. Near these card-players stood a little, fat, stout fellow, whose only employment seemed to be the delight he took in disturbing the game, by singing, as loud as he could bawl, a ditty that appeared to be particularly disagreeable to the old man's ears, as from time to time he begged the singer to desist.

One man, heavily ironed, whose fetters clanked in time to the motion of his feet, was



seen pacing up and down the court-yard alone; his beard and hair hanging wild and matted, his clothes retaining in no part their original colour, and so tattered, as to leave bare his sinewy arms and legs; whilst, his countenance exhibiting an expression of the most reckless brutality, he gazed about him with the utmost indifference, as if wholly insensible to his condition. This man was charged with the crime of murder.

Apart from all the rest, shunned by all, and even by the murderer, appeared a group of persons both male and female, whose sober appearance and quiet deportment, together with an air of composure and resignation strongly depicted in the countenance of each, at once proclaimed that their only crime was the result of conscience. These were accused of heresy.

Wilford and Alice, who had not yet been separated, though they were both in custody, now conversed together, and the former endeavoured, by every argument that religion or

affection could suggest, to arm her mind to meet with firmness the day of her calamity. Whilst Wilford was speaking to Alice, a man with a very red face, and habited meanly in a doublet and hose of rusty black, with a cross suspended from his neck, and an ink-horn from the button, came up, and saluted the good pastor with an air of familiarity, assuring him that he was very glad to see him. Wilford returned this salutation with cold civility.

“Master Parson,” said the man, “for I see by your gown you are one, you need not stand off so shy, like a game-cock that won’t fight; we are all fellows here, and crow alike on the same perch, and so I mean nothing but in a civil and a friendly way, and you had better receive me well.”

“God forbid,” replied Wilford, “that I should receive the good intentions of any man otherwise; but as you are a total stranger to me, I am at a loss to know how I can be particularly indebted to you for friendship, except,

indeed, it be that friendly desire for mutual good offices one prisoner should entertain towards another.”

“There you are out again, Master Parson,” said the intruder. “I bless our Lady that I am no prisoner here, but one who acts in the way of business for the prisoners. My name is Timothy Cutt, a scrivener by profession. I write letters, appeals, and make out *alibis* and cases for those who cannot write themselves. In short, though no attorney, I often do just as well for prisoners as if they put themselves into the hands of one of the law, to have their feathers plucked off, and nothing left but the bare bones for old mother Justice to gnaw upon;—and seeing how it is with you, Master Parson, for I guess you are in here for a faggot and a roast,” (continued the scrivener, smiling at the pleasantness of his own conceit,) “I thought, perhaps, you might lack a help of my function,—a touch of my pen.”

“I thank you, but I can write myself,” re-

plied Wilford, "and indite somewhat too, I hope; it would be else no small shame to the gown I have so long worn."

"No shame at all, if you could not tell great A from little b," continued Cutt; "for many of our priests can say or sing their mass by rote very well; but once put them out, or give them their missal book to put them in, and, St. Benedict bless them! they cannot find the right place; they are as completely foundered as an old horse that has broken down in the course. I have written many things, and good and quaint devices to help many a Romish priest out of a strait, and especially one of Augustine's monks, who was taken up on a charge of making angels for King Edward without a legal power to canonize them. And I have as good skill as any man in Canterbury at writing a recantation for a heretic, or to help him to a last speech at a burning. In short, I serve all people in an honest way for

one groat per sheet, and find paper into the bargain."

"I thank you," answered Wilford, "but I do not need your services."

"Perhaps," continued the important scrivener, "you may doubt my skill, or the truth of what I say. But only ask that old gentleman, with the long white beard, who is playing at cards; ask him, if I have not done him many a good service by my pen.—Here, old Jemmy Jinkins," added Timothy Cutt, aloud; "tell the parson how I got you off when you were sent to prison on a charge for false swearing, at the instigation of the Countess of Rochfort, against the Queen, Ann Boleyn."

"Do not appeal to me, Timothy," replied the white-bearded card-player; "I need no man's aid at inditing; though I allow you copied out a statement for me, to assist in showing the innocence of my conscience in that matter."

“ Was that all I did for you, old white-locks?” cried Timothy. “ Why now, that ’s what I call gratitude. Why, you lying old rascal, was not I the man to bring you through three several committals for perjury ; two for cheating by false weights ; one for forgery ; and sundry other minor offences ; such as pick-pocketing, cut-pursing, and keeping a stew without a licence ? But you have no more gratitude than a thief.”

“ What is the card ?” said the old man ; continuing his game without heeding Timothy Cutt’s appeal to his recollection for past services.

“ The knave of clubs is the card,” answered the dingy beau of Whitehall.

“ And he takes your queen of spades,” replied the old man.

“ Mind what you are saying, Jemmy Jinkins,” cried Cutt ; “ take care how you talk about knaves and queens being together. Mind you don’t get into bad bread with her Grace

Queen Mary and Bishop Bonner for so doing. Sir George Blagues was taken up at Paul's Cross for as small a matter.\*

“ But you are an old sinner, Jemmy Jenkins, and you can't deny a word of what I have said about you; for all the prison knows that you would have been hanged long ago if it had not been for my helps, sinner as you are.”

“ The sins of my youth have been long since repented,” said the old card-player, “ and

\* In the time of King Henry VIII., Sir George Blagues was taken up at Paul's Cross, for some slight words that he spoke playfully, which were conceived to be in ridicule of the mass. He was condemned to be burnt. “ When the news came thereof to the privy-council, the king hearing them whispering together, (which he could never abide,) commanded them to tell him the matter.” The king, on hearing it, granted Sir George a pardon, and sent for him; who coming after into the king's presence, “ Ah, my pig!” said the king to him, (for so he was wont to call Sir George,) “ art thou there?”—“ Yea,” (quoth he,) “ and if your Majesty had not been better to me than your bishops were, your pig had been well roasted ere this time.”— See “ Mirrour of Martyrs,” printed in London, 1633.

I have laid out the savings of my industry to purchase pardons, absolutions, and indulgences, enough to clean any man's conscience, and to carry him, as it were, on horseback to heaven; and I daily bless his Holiness, for granting me such comforts for my money."

Here the little fat fellow again set up his song as loud as he could roar it out.

"You disturb our pastime, John Skylark," said the old man; and besides, it is an infamous heretical jargon of foul rhymes that you now sing, to the dishonour of the service of his Holiness."

"Don't you talk about holiness, Jemmy Jinkins," replied the singer. "You have not as much holiness in you, as would serve to make a fish-wife's oath seem good, when she swears that her stinking herrings are fresh ones. And as for my song, I don't care who hears it; and I would sing *News out of London*\* under

\* *News out of London* was a famous heretical song of the period, common with the vulgar, in ridicule of the mass.



the Pope's nose if I liked it, and never cry grace for so doing. But I believe you are as great a heretic in your heart, Jemmy, as the best of them; though you can play cards and cheat at them too, as readily as any old dowager's confessor."

"I a heretic!" exclaimed Jemmy Jenkins; "I defy your words. No; I bless our Lady and all the saints! I am no heretic. My belief is most Catholic and Roman; I trust in all the saints, and in all the relics of the saints; I entirely believe in his Holiness the Pope, and in Bishop Bonner; I believe all that he commands me to believe, and renounce all that he renounces; I pay as good a price as any body for the pardons and indulgences so necessary to the weakness of the flesh; I buy a bag of them at a time; I carry a faggot at my own cost to the burning of every heretic that comes in my way; and if that is not being a true believer after her Grace's own heart, I don't know where you will find a religious man now-a-

days. To go on with our game,—let me see—where was I?—making or marring?”

“Why that’s a thing quite as unlawful as my song,” cried the little man; “you are not so nice in all matters to obey the Queen, as you are about saying your prayers, old Jemmy, else there would be no black and white in your games.”

“What’s that you say?” said Cluny, who at this moment was passing near the card-players in his way towards the spot where Wilford stood. “What are those fellows playing at?”

“Black and White, or Making and Marring,”\* replied the singer.

No sooner did Cluny hear this, than he pounced upon both cards and card-players, something in the same way as a cat pounces

\* Black and White, or Making and Marring, was put down by Act of Parliament in the third year of Queen Mary’s reign, as well as sundry other games considered injurious to the morals of the people.

upon and holds within her claws an unlucky mouse chased into a corner. "I seize them, I seize the cards in the Queen's name," cried Cluny: "you are taken in the fact, playing an unlawful and prohibited game, put down by act of parliament in the third of the present reign. I shall seize the stakes too; the statute will bear me out, since monies wagered at an unlawful game come under the penalty of the law."

Whilst Cluny was thus exclaiming against an unlawful game, and pocketing both the cards and the money staked down, the old man with the white beard got up, and, now that he was on his legs, he looked so wretched and meagre, that his appearance was more like that of a figure cut down from a gibbet than a living creature. "Thomas Cluny," said he, addressing the attorney, "I fancy that you have forgot me; for now-a-days so ungracious is this world grown, that men are apt to forget their best friends—but I pray you, for the

sake of former acquaintance, not to be too hard upon an old man for practising an innocent pastime to beguile the cares of his conscience." This speech was pronounced aloud; but Jemmy Jenkins had another for the private ear of the attorney; and drawing him a little aside, he added in a whisper, "Cluny, we know one another,—sweep the stakes, if you will be content with that; but don't pocket the cards. I have a pigeon here who has a few feathers left for my plucking—you shall have a quill of the rifle. So, do leave the cards for my use, and you know by experience that I am not a dry-fisted fellow to a friend."

Cluny winked his eye, and nodded his head, laid his fore-finger upon his nose, and said softly, "Don't ask for the cards; but here, you old dog, put your paw into my pocket; pick it, pick 'em out yourself; it's not the first time you've done that in your life, you know. Sharp—sharp, I say; you have not surely for-

got the trick of Paul's Cross, to hear a sermon, and filch the auditors as they stand staring at the preacher."

Jemmy Jenkins looked intelligence, as Cluny suffered the old rogue to pick his pocket of the cards in a most professional manner; and he forthwith returned to strip the miserable man of fashion of his last penny, according to the promise made to the attorney. Cluny's power was indeed great in Canterbury Castle. There was no one, innocent or guilty, whom, somehow or other, he did not manage to bring within his toils. He was like a busy spider in his web, ready and watching to snap up and to entangle each unwary fly which might chance but to brush its wing within the intricate maze framed by its ingenious enemy. With prisoners who had no money to pay certain fees of office, Cluny was very severe; but to others, who dropped a little coin in his path, Cluny was very merciful,—overlooking their transgressions, and granting them indul-

gences as effectual as the Pope's, and treating their offences in his own mind in a manner as perfectly oblivious as if he had pronounced absolution on the offenders.

Cluny now joined the keeper of the prison, and came forward to give orders for locking up and securing the persons of the new prisoners ; and Alice and her husband were separated to be confined in opposite parts of the Castle. Wilford ventured to inquire if he might be permitted to see his daughter and his servant Abel Allen during his confinement. No counter order had been issued by the Suffragan of Dover, so that this request was not denied ; but it was not extended to any other than the two above-named persons, Abel and Rose.

Wilford rejoiced to find that he should at least be allowed one indulgence thus dear to his heart, and did not press upon his enemies any more questions ; nay, so indifferent was he to his own personal comforts, that he actually forgot to ask in what part of the Castle he was to

be confined. Soon after, he bade a last farewell to Alice, and was conducted to his cell in a frame of mind so composed and resigned to his fate, so fully conscious his sufferings were the dispensations of Heaven, that he seemed already to soar in spirit to that world, where neither malice, bigotry, nor superstition, can reach the soul they so gladly would consign to the greatest misery here on earth.

## CHAPTER VI.

ON the morrow, Rose and Allen were busily employed in making some necessary arrangement, not only with a view to their present accommodation at the house of Widow Littlewit, but also in the hope to afford some comforts to Wilford and Alice in their prison. Whilst they were thus occupied, Edward set out with the intent to visit his parents in Canterbury Castle; but as he was seen soon after to pass out of the city by Westgate, it appeared he had not yet been able to gratify the wish of his heart in obtaining such an interview.

Edward Wilford walked on towards the same road he had traversed on the preceding evening with his sister and Abel Allen, and he had



nearly gained the wood belonging to Sir Richard Southwell, through which they had passed, before he perceived that old Abel's trusty Pincher was at his heels. When the heart is sorely oppressed, and the mind harassed by anxious thoughts, we often feel wholly indifferent to those things which, in happier moments, afford us a source of innocent delight. So was it now with Wilford; for, as the dog jumped and played about him, far from being pleased by its caresses, he repelled them, and attempted to drive Pincher back again. The faithful animal, that seemed sensible of his unkindness, hung down his ears; but, instead of retreating, stood at a little distance, as if determined to follow Wilford when he should move onward. "Alas!" said Edward, "why should I drive the poor creature back, and treat him as the world has treated me? I have not so many friends, that I should dispense with one of the most faithful." And, repenting what he had done, he called the animal by its name, and the

dog instantly sprang forward, rejoicing to find that he was again taken into favour.

Wilford pursued his walk ; and the melancholy of his mood seemed to refresh itself at the sight of those very objects that supplied a fresh source of mournful contemplation. Once more he was wandering amidst scenery that a few years before was familiar to him, and where, in happier hours, he had delighted to roam, as he pictured forth, with the vivacity of youth, those hopes of futurity that are raised by the imagination to captivate the heart and to keep alive expectation—hopes that are so often lost and withered amid the sad realities of human life.

The morning was fine, and had all that freshness which gives to beauty itself an added charm. The trees grew thick around, stretching their long arms over the pathway, and glittering with dew. There was an opening purposely cut through some of them, in order to afford that burst of view, so strikingly beautiful, when we suddenly come upon it from

out the deep shade and intricacy of a forest. From this spot was seen, as through a window, the valley in which was situated the family mansion of Sir Richard Southwell.

The valley was of that character so peculiar to the county of Kent: it was rich, varied, and cultivated. The house had been erected about the time of Henry the Seventh. The gateway that led into the inner court was flanked by two elevated towers with battlements around their tops; and near this entrance was seen a small Gothic chapel, a frequent accompaniment to the houses of the English nobility and gentry of the period. Not far from the chapel, a still and transparent lake spread itself, like a vast mirror, to a considerable distance, reflecting upon the deep blue of its waters every fretted window and rising pinnacle of the Gothic pile. Beyond the lake arose a gentle eminence, clothed with a thick wood, where many an oak and elm, that had grown old as they stood, like the guardians of the forest, reared their

bald heads and scathed arms far above every surrounding object. A herd of deer was seen to stray under their broad shadows, whilst some of these dappled "burghers of the wood" were slaking their thirst on the margin of the lake, as the sun shone bright upon their "velvet coats" and branching antlers. An extensive, lawn that lay in front of the house, swept sloping down to the very verge of a rivulet that supplied the waters of the lake; and at some distance was seen the river Stour, as it meandered and watered in its course the little village of Wellminster.

Wilford stopped a moment whilst he contemplated this prospect. Every object had a tongue that spoke in thrilling accents to his heart. Overcome by the painful recollections that were called up in his own mind, he hastily turned away, and striking down another path that led towards the outlet of the wood, he walked quickly on, as if fearful of again trusting himself to his own reflections. At length

he came to a spot where an oak tree, whose age was only estimated by conjecture, since some averred it to be more than five hundred years old, stood alone, like the lord and founder of the forest. The branches that covered the top were entirely bare; towards the centre a few boughs were still clothed with their mantle of foliage; and the trunk of the tree, riven and entirely hollow in the body, now contained a seat for the passenger within its antiquated and natural recess. Wilford remembered the old tree as a familiar friend; and throwing himself upon the seat, paused for a moment to give vent to those feelings he could no longer subdue. Whilst he sat fixed in thought, he heard the bark of the dog, that had run on before him; and a slight rustling among the leaves assured him that some one was approaching. He instantly arose, and, turning towards the pathway, suddenly encountered a young lady, who appeared to be leisurely walking through the wood.

Edward instantly recognised her, and exclaimed, in a voice deep and tremulous with emotion, “Arabella!”

The lady looked up in his face as he pronounced her name, and uttered an involuntary shriek of terror as she endeavoured to pass forward. Wilford caught her by the gown, and cried aloud, “Stay, I conjure you ; I command you, stay !” in such an emphatic manner, and with looks so wild, yet so expressive of a determined purpose, that the lady stood irresolute, reluctant, as it seemed, to remain, yet fearful to depart.

“Good God !” exclaimed Edward Wilford ; “is it come to this pass, that you would shun me as if I were a thing the most abhorred, the greatest stranger to you upon the face of the whole earth ? Look at me, Arabella ; can you, dare you forget me in the sight of God and man ?”

The young lady, whose person and countenance were of the greatest beauty, looked down

upon the ground. She remained silent; but her colour changed from red to white, and every nerve in her body seemed to shake like the aspen quivering in the wind.

“ Look at me, Arabella ! Speak to me, I beseech you ! ” continued Wilford. “ Who am I ? Can your heart deny me, though your tongue refuses to acknowledge me ? In the sight of God, by the sacred compact sealed in His name, am I not your husband ? ”

“ No, no, ” said the lady ; “ the ceremony of the Church was never solemnized, and the compact is void by—— ”

“ Wretched, miserable subterfuge ! ” exclaimed Edward indignantly. “ Is it because a mere ceremony was wanting that the most sacred vows must be void—a compact given by your own consent, and sanctioned by the authority of the only natural guardian you then possessed ? Oh, Arabella ! can I bear to think that you, you whom I delighted to fancy the image of all that is good and perfect here on earth, can

thus abuse, play with, and trample under foot, the laws of God and man, the inviolable engagements of honour and affection?"

The lady seemed greatly distressed by this appeal. The tears burst from her eyes, and fell fast down her cheeks, as she said, "Why do you reproach me? You know it was my father."

"Your father can have no power to set aside those common ties of justice and humanity that bind one creature to another,—and why am I thus used? Great God! why was I cast off? Am I alone to suffer by a man whose name stands in the world as the example of all that is worthy?"

"You know—you cannot forget the cause," said Arabella: "My father has insisted that faith cannot——"

"Cannot be kept to me!" said Edward Wilford, interrupting her; "because I am what he esteems a heretic! Think, Arabella, what I have suffered for your sake, and for your mo-



ther's too. Lady Southwell, with whose death I but lately became acquainted, was, in early life, what Sir Richard now terms me, heretical; and, however she might be prevailed with afterwards to change her faith, her heart was ever inclined to the Reformers. Think how I have been used, encouraged, flattered, my affection for you nursed and fanned into life, till even habit itself made that affection a second life to me. Your father was absent, it is true, in foreign parts; but your mother led me to think that he would approve our mutual love; even the contract was drawn between us;\* I thought you mine—mine in the sight of God! And then what followed? think of that!”

“ My father returned from the embassy he had so long entertained in France,” said Arabella; “ and learning from your own lips your detestation of the Roman Church, and your

\* At the period of our narrative, a written contract of marriage generally passed between persons of family and fortune, before the performance of the ceremony.

firm belief in the new doctrines, he banished you his house for ever; and, angered as he was with my poor mother for her weakness, threatened her, if she sanctioned your pursuit of me, to part from her also for ever."

"And to save her," replied Edward, ("for she was worn in mind and body with these wretched times,)—to save her, I consented to absent myself from the kingdom. But never, Arabella, never did I renounce the compact that is between us. Your mother is now at peace; she is dead; she can no longer suffer by your father's stern and fearful opinions; and I hold you still as mine, as my affianced wife by your own act and will."

Arabella clasped her hands together, and, looking up imploringly in Wilford's face, she said, "Oh, do not, do not think of me; for, if you do, my father may be your ruin. He is in all things a merciful, a good man; but where his religion is at stake,—where the welfare, as he

would deem it, of my soul is concerned, there is nothing but he would do to save me.”

“ Arabella,” said Wilford, “ that I now renew my claim, must convince you that I am reckless of my own safety. Whilst your mother lived, there was a bond in honour that would have held me apart from you, even had her years been extended to the extreme verge of old age, since I would not sacrifice her to the tyranny of your bigoted father. But were *you* once mine, I would assert a husband’s right ; and Sir Richard, though your father, should never enslave either your mind or your body. You are bound to me by your own act, and I will never cancel that bond.”

“ Can you, can you wish to hold me by it !” exclaimed Arabella, “ when you know what would be the inevitable consequence of its fulfilment ?”

“ You mistake me, I fear,—sadly mistake me, Arabella,” said the young man. “ I would

despise that bond without the heart that gave it. No, Arabella, though to part with you for ever would give me a deeper pang than all the cruelties your father might enforce against me, yet, did I but think you had forgotten me, I would as freely break the tie that binds you to me, as I could tear asunder this light web of the spider that hangs across our path;—I want no ties without affection.”

Arabella wept, and only repeated the name of her father, her fears for her father. Wilford continued—“ But I know you have not, you could not forget me, Arabella. We were play-mates in childhood, before we knew any thing of those wretched discords that arise by the folly of man, from a religion that was sent as the bond of peace and love.”

“ My mother was good, virtuous, and pious,” said Arabella, “ and condemned none who obeyed the laws of God in their actions, however they might differ on some points of doctrine.”

“ And she,” replied Wilford, “ delighted to

see our growing love. She first bid me hope to win you. Think of the days, the years that I have lived but for you ; and then ask your own heart, if you could, if you ought to forget me, and, in requital for all my honest affection, to cast me off to the wide world, where, God help me ! I could not find one hope of happiness or peace."

" You must not say that," said Arabella. " Think how dear you are to your family, and how much they look to you as the support of their declining years. We never meet them now ; but I know they do so. Only look to them."

" Look to them !" exclaimed Wilford, in great agitation, " and where shall I find them ? In a prison—deserted, accused, driven from their peaceful home ; their grey hairs held up as a theme for mockery and scorn, and their lives endangered by the cruel followers of your father's faith."

" Alas ! alas !" said Arabella, " I never

heard of this. When did it happen?—where are they?—can I do them good?—can my father?”

“I am now about to seek your father on their account,” replied Wilford. “Whatever may be my determination concerning you, Arabella, I did not now come to seek you, or to plead to you for the fulfilment of your promise. No, though I were to lose you for ever, I could not, for a moment, when my father lies in prison and in danger of his life, bestow so much care on any hope, however dear to my heart, but what concerns his safety. I was going to your father when I met you.”

“For what purpose?” inquired Arabella. “My father is now engaged with his confessor, and he will not leave his oratory for some time to come. On no consideration would he be disturbed whilst he is so engaged. You may not see him for this hour.”

“Then,” said Wilford, “I will pass the time that is so unexpectedly given to me with you.

My business with your father will be brief. I visited Canterbury Castle this morning with a view to gain access to my father, for I have not yet seen him, since I returned but last night from abroad. I was denied admission at the prison-gates, and the keeper told me that I could not enter them unless I procured an order to do so either from the Suffragan of Dover, or from Sir Richard Southwell, the high-sheriff of the county. I could not ask Thornton, for he but last night arrested my father. I should have forgot myself had I seen him, and might have injured my father by the violence of my own feelings towards his oppressor. To meet Sir Richard Southwell, my own enemy, is evil enough ; but I choose it as the least ; and from him I must solicit the admission to see my parents in their afflictions."

" I am sure," said Arabella, " I think he will not deny your request ; but do not, I beseech you, for your own sake,—do not name me to him."

“ I shall not purposely do so,” replied Wilford, “ but I cannot answer for what circumstances may occasion me to mention or to withhold.”

“ Do not name the contract,” said Arabella, “ since my father considers it for ever annulled by the Cardinal’s decree to render it void.”

“ Does he consider it annulled ?” repeated Wilford indignantly. “ It is not annulled by me, at least ; and I am some party concerned, I believe ; and that he should find, if my poor father were but once in safety. No Cardinal nor Pope can abrogate a solemn vow made in the name of God. Still, I repeat it, all lies in your own power : speak but sincerely, Arabella ; will you dare to speak the truth to me ?” Wilford took her hand, and as he pressed it to his lips, the tears stood in his eyes, and he said, in accents of the tenderest affection, “ How long, how ardently I have loved, God only knows ; He has seen all that



I have suffered for your sake, and I would only ask you now to requite me with sincerity. My heart is nearly broken; do not you finish the work by a cruelty I have not deserved."

"What can I say?" said Arabella. "What would you have me do? Must I become the means of involving you in danger—perhaps in ruin?"

"Tell me, Arabella," continued Wilford, in a solemn voice,—“tell me, in the name of Him who knows the secrets of all hearts, in whose presence we now stand, and to whom we must both answer at the dreadful day of retribution,—tell me, was that engagement the free act of your own will?"

Arabella, thus solemnly addressed by Edward, could no longer hesitate, and she replied, "Yes it was," in a firm and emphatic manner.

"Did you renounce it," continued Wilford, "by your own will, or solely by the command of your father?"

"It was my father," answered Arabella,

“ who obliged me to renounce it. I obeyed from fear.”

“ And your heart is still mine?” said Edward; “ I know it is. These moments—this very anxiety to give me up, in the hope to preserve me from danger, all declare it. Then let the worst come, whilst I have life I will never renounce you but by your own will:” and Edward folded the weeping Arabella to his bosom, as he endeavoured to soothe her agitation, and to support her mind to bear with firmness whatever might befall him. “ I know you, Arabella,” continued Wilford; “ you are good, kind, and tender; but your temper is timid, and you have much of the weakness of your poor mother in your nature; you are one who in this world is carried down the stream by the force of circumstances, having no force of your own sufficient to meet or to repel them. But think of me, Arabella, and do not sacrifice us both to the tyranny of a blind and heartless bigotry.”

“ You must not speak thus,” said Arabella, “ of that faith in which I have been educated. Though my father often accuses me of being half a Reformer in my heart, yet I am of his Church ; still I learnt from my mother to abhor those acts of cruelty and superstition enjoined by a spirit of persecution.”

“ God has already touched your heart,” replied Wilford, “ and in His own good time, I doubt not, but that He will perfect the work He has begun. Have you still the few books I put into your hands that might lead you to examine the principles of our faith ?”

“ I have them,” answered Arabella ; “ but I dared not avow such books were in my possession, and given me by you ; and besides that, the faith in which I have been educated forbids its followers to inquire into the truth of its principles by those works the Church deems heretical. My faith demands absolute submission—absolute obedience to its doctrines.”

“ Good God !” said Wilford : “ to think that

the revelation of the Gospel, which, of all other truths, will best bear the most rigid scrutiny, should be thus abused, thus be made the instrument of a deep and wicked policy; first to enslave the mind, and then to govern it by fraud and tyranny!"

"I must be gone," said Arabella; "though a follower of the Church of Rome, my mother early taught me that mercy and charity are consistent with all religions founded on Christianity. I would not, therefore, hear you speak thus of the faith I have been taught to believe by a father:—you lack charity in your discourse."

"Well," said Edward, "if I do, it is the persecution of these times that has taught me to think ill of the religion that gives birth to it. I will pray to God for you, Arabella, that He may enlighten your mind, and make it more worthy of your heart."

"And I will pray God to bless you too, Wilford," replied Arabella, "and to show

mercy to your afflicted parents. I feel for them and deeply commiserate their sad fortunes. I remember the dear old man your father; and even when a child I loved to receive his blessing; for though he was one of King Edward's clergy, yet I knew him to be a good man, and a good man's blessing I always thought must be acceptable in the sight of God."

"May every blessing encompass you!" said Edward. "Will you return towards the house—shall I bear you company, or must I leave you here? And tell me, may I hope sometimes to be permitted to see you? if but for a moment, it will be some consolation to me."

"We must part here," replied Arabella. "By the time you reach the house, I think, my father will be at leisure to receive you. Beware what you say to him. I conjure you to be prudent, for your own sake as well as mine. I dare tarry no longer; farewell!"

Edward Wilford bade her a hasty but affectionate adieu, again conjuring her that he might

be allowed sometimes to see her. But Arabella assured him that she was not the mistress of her own actions, and begged he would cease to press upon her the subject at the present time. Wilford, though disappointed, was obliged to yield to her request; and at length, quitting her side, he advanced without delay towards the house, as Arabella continued her walk to the village of Wellminster.

## CHAPTER VII.

EDWARD WILFORD soon gained the entrance leading through the great gateway to the house of Sir Richard Southwell. As he crossed the inner court, he met a man habited in the garb of a Friar. His countenance was dark and swarthy; and there was in it that expression of pride, mingled with gravity, that induced Edward to believe that he was one of those many Spanish Friars who had been brought into England by King Philip,—a circumstance that excited the indignation of the English, since it was contrary to Philip's marriage-treaty with Mary, wherein it had been expressly stipulated that no foreigner should fill any office in this country, and that Spaniards should not be en-

couraged to intrude themselves into the court or realm. But Philip, whose marriage had been wholly political, and whose ambition induced him to hope that one day this kingdom would become subject to the Spanish yoke, not only brought in foreigners, but those of the most artful and insidious kind, since many of his train of Spanish friars were of the newly-instituted order of the Jesuits; and he had taken care to select such as were familiar with the English tongue.

The bigotry of Mary induced her to countenance these men; and the measures she adopted by instituting a Commission that was to perambulate the different towns and cities, (expressly to receive informations to detect the Reformers,) clearly proved that she was nothing loth to see the spirit of the Spanish Inquisition established in her own kingdom.

It is well known to every reader of the interesting biography of this period, that amongst other abominable arts laid to ensnare Cranmer,



one of them was that of besetting him with some of these Spanish Friars; who, by intimidation, flattery, falsehood, and cunning, each employed by turns, at length procured that recantation for which he sorrowed even at the stake itself. Edward Wilford knew this. No wonder, therefore, that he shuddered as he looked upon a man who, he did not doubt, was one of these agents of darkness and of guilt.

As Wilford was about to ascend the flight of steps that lay before the hall-door of Sir Richard's house, the Friar came up to him, and asked somewhat abruptly, "who and what he wanted there?"

"Sir Richard Southwell," said Edward; and, vexed as he was in mind, his temper had become irritable, so that it often vented itself on the least occasion of offence; and he now added rather sharply, "Are you the porter here, that you ask me my business? For if you are not, the question is impertinent."

"My habit will tell you who I am," an-

swered the Friar ; “ and I have a right to ask any question of whomsoever I please when they approach this house. I therefore repeat my question,—What do you want here ?”

“ Sir Richard Southwell,” replied Wilford.

“ I do not know that you may see him,” said the Friar. “ And, till I know what is the nature of your business, I do not know if it would be fitting that you should see him.”

“ I shall ask the question, however, of the porter at the hall-door,” answered Wilford, and he advanced immediately up the steps ; but ere he could reach the broad platform that terminated their extensive range, the Friar strode up before him ; and facing Wilford, declared, in a peremptory manner, that he should not enter the house till he stated upon what business he sought for an interview with Sir Richard Southwell. “ I am his confessor and his friend,” continued the Friar ; “ and you are habited in a foreign fashion as strange as your deportment. These are dangerous times,

and you shall not enter till I know, at least, who you are."

"These are dangerous times indeed," replied Wilford, "when, as you say, foreigners appear among us, and dare to interrupt an Englishman on his own native land. I am Edward Wilford,—the name is well known and honoured in Kent, since my father has long borne it. And who are you, that take thus upon you to question me, as if I stood before the Grand Inquisitor?"

"I am not afraid to declare my name," replied the Friar. "It is John de Villa Garcini."

No sooner had Edward heard these words, than the previous irritability of his temper became wrought to the highest degree of passion. This man, he remembered, was the Spaniard who had been as a friend to Cranmer. This was the man, he knew, who was to fill the cure in Wellminster, from which his own father, Owen Wilford, had been so cruelly ejected. Edward's blood boiled within him; and, forget-

ting his prudence, in the moment of extreme passion, he rushed up the steps and seized the Friar by the collar of his gown, as he exclaimed : “ Your name is enough to tell me *what you are*. Either give place to me this instant, and let me pass quietly into the house, or your cowl and gown shall not protect you. You shall find your way down the steps much faster than you ascended them.”

The Friar looked haughtily upon Edward Wilford ; as he said in a calm yet provoking manner, “ I could laugh at you for a fool, but that I pity you, and think you a madman. But take care what you dare do with me. You shall *not* pass in.”

Wilford instantly, with all the violence and rapidity that passion gives to action, struck the Friar a smart blow upon the head, that nearly sent him reeling down the steps ; and Pincher, who had followed close at Edward’s heels, seeing these signs of hostility on the part of his young master, thought proper to join in the

fray, and fiercely attacked the Friar about the skirts of his long gown, in which he tore a large hole. The Friar, in his efforts to shake off the dog, could not immediately attend to his other opponent; and Wilford, whose passions were soon cooled, when, even by an act of his own vehemence, he gained but time for a moment's reflection, now blamed himself. He thought he had handled the Friar perhaps too roughly; and that, though he might be a devil, still he wore the habit of a churchman. "I know the fellow is a scoundrel," thought Wilford; "but I ought to have spared him for the sake of his gown."

Yet, notwithstanding this feeling of regret for what he had done, Wilford could not bring himself to make an unlimited apology for the rash act he had committed; and, after calling off the dog, he merely said to the Friar, who was even dumb with astonishment and indignation, "Why did you provoke me to forget myself? As a member of the Church, though of

an erroneous Church,—as my elder, I know I ought to ask your pardon; but I cannot do so of a man who is my father's ancient enemy. Nevertheless, if I have offended the laws of my country in your person, I am ready to answer for it."

"Offended the laws of your country in my person!" repeated the Friar, as a look of the most diabolical malice overspread his features; "is that all you have done? And when you struck a blow at *me*?"—the Friar paused a moment, and then added, in a tone of voice and in a manner not to be described—"You *may* enter the house now; I shall remember you." The Spaniard did not utter another word, but drew his cowl close over his head, descended the steps in hasty strides, and struck into the pathway that led towards the private garden near the house.

Wilford gained admission to the hall, and, whilst he was asking a domestic if Sir Richard

Southwell might be at home, an elderly female, of a respectable and grave demeanour, advanced towards him, having caught the sounds of his voice, as she was crossing the upper end of the hall.

“ Master Edward ! dear Master Edward ! ” exclaimed the woman ; “ Can it be you ? It is many a long day since I saw you at Westminster Hall : what can bring you here now ? I am afraid that I must say, you will not be so welcome as you used to be in my poor lady’s time. But, dear heart, how things do change in this world ! ”

“ Dear Mistress Deborah, ” said Edward, as he kindly shook this old acquaintance by the hand, “ I rejoice to see you so well ; but times are so sadly altered with me and mine, that few things in this world can now afford me a glimpse of comfort, far less of pleasure. I came hither to seek Sir Richard Southwell, as I have some business of consequence that renders

it absolutely necessary I should see him, and I have already found some difficulty in gaining a footing even upon the threshold of his door."

"You shall see him," replied the housekeeper, for it was to the person who held that office in Sir Richard's family that Edward now addressed himself. "Follow me, Master Wilford," she continued, "and I will lead you into the new gallery that has been finished since you were here. Sir Richard's great-uncle, the Lord of Southerton, is dead, and so Sir Richard has had all the old family pictures moved here, and hung up in the new gallery, for he was his great-uncle's sole heir; and as my master is now engaged with people who are come to him about county business, you cannot see him till they are gone. But I'll send him word that a gentleman is waiting for him, and he will come to you as soon as he can; and in the mean time you shall follow me."

The housekeeper called a servant to her side, and dispatched her message by him to Sir



Richard. She then led Edward Wilford into the new picture-gallery as she had promised; and though, from the agitated state of his feelings, Wilford would gladly at this moment have dispensed with her civilities, yet he was too good-natured to give offence, by declining them to one who really designed to do him a kindness, and to show him every attention.

When they reached the gallery, the old housekeeper gave a full vent to her feelings, and for some time held Edward in conversation about her late lady, and repeatedly assured him how glad she was once more to see him. "And so am I to see you, Deborah," replied Edward; "for I have not forgotten old times, when you used so kindly to receive me, and to open the door to me yourself, when I came to visit Lady Southwell and Arabella. I can never forget the past, Deborah."

Deborah shook her head mournfully, and was proceeding to make some reply,—but observing another female domestic who came into

the gallery on some slight pretext, but really to satisfy her curiosity by observing the young stranger, the housekeeper said in a soft under voice to Wilford, "We had better not talk about it now. People say walls have ears sometimes; and if they have not, I know one who has, and quick ears too, to catch what does not concern them. The Friar rules old Master now, and most of the servants are under that Spanish fellow's control." And then she added aloud—"Only look round the room, and see what a grand gallery Sir Richard has made here! I always show the pictures to strangers myself; and I will tell you all about them, whilst you are waiting the coming of my master; for there's no harm to talk about folks dead so long ago, though we must not say a word about the living."

Edward cast a cursory glance round the apartment; for his mind was too much occupied with his own anxieties, to be capable of feeling much interest in the good-natured pro-

posal of Mistress Deborah, whose manner of showing pictures was very different from that of the modern housekeeper, when she appears so dressed as often not to be known from the mistress of the family ; and, walking the stranger hastily round the apartments that she professes to show, just gives him time sufficient to hear the names of the pictures, but certainly not to see them, and pocketing the usual compliment in a style quite as professional as that with which a physician receives his fee, curtsies civilly, and turns him out.

Mistress Deborah, on the contrary, was a housekeeper of the olden time. She neither looked, nor affected to look, like a fine lady ; and her tall and stiff person, arrayed in a plain black silk, of most substantial substance, every fold of which stood on end, being rendered unpliant by a lining of buckram, proclaimed the wearer to be above the common degree of domestics, but below that of country dames and yeomen's wives ; whilst her hood and pinner sat

close round a countenance, to which a habit of controlling the inferiors of a large household had given something of a stern air, and a large bunch of keys depending from a leathern girdle announced at once the consequence of her charge and the nature of her office at Wellminster Hall. The gallery, into which she had conducted Edward, was a chamber of considerable length, spacious, and furnished, agreeably to the fashion of the time, with chairs and tables richly carved and ornamented in the style which may be observed in the pictures of Hans Holbein. A chimney, large enough to hold many persons, and with so wide a tunnel that the light streamed down it as from a window, displayed a magnificent pair of dogs chased in silver. The windows were so far raised above the floor, that though they afforded sufficient light to the apartment, yet, on account of their height, no person standing in the room could look out of them to view the beautiful prospect of the Kentish hills and valleys commanded by

the site of the house ; whilst the arms and bearings of Sir Richard Southwell's family and alliances appeared glittering in the rainbow-hues of the varied and brilliant glass. A cabinet of carved ebony supported a service of the richest gold plate, that adorned its top ; and upon the oak panels of the chamber were seen, arranged in chronological order, the ancestors of the family, beginning with a portrait, in the hard style of the Gothic ages, that displayed all its minute finish and exact attention, even to the defects of nature.

This portrait was on wood, of the time of Henry III., and represented a female, the abbess of a nunnery near Cranbrook. Her countenance expressed too much worldly pride to be quite consistent with the humble votary of a cell ; she seemed to look like one who would say, "I am my Lady Abbess:" and so faithful had been the pencil of the Gothic artist, that he had not forgotten to represent a mole upon her cheek, and a more than usual colour of the rose

that had fastened itself upon the very extremity of the old lady's nose. An enormous rosary depended from her side; and her right hand rested upon a human skull, the emblem of mortality. Yet, as if pride lingered even near death itself, a formidable coat of arms, carefully painted on a ground of gold, appeared at the top in one corner of the picture.

“That is the portrait of the Lady Grisilda de Fortibras, a great heiress,” said the housekeeper, “who, upon becoming Abbess to the Convent of our Lady at Cranbrook, gave the manor of Wellminster to her relation Thomas de Southerton, a grand ancestor of Sir Richard's family; and all the rest of her wealth went to the house where she ruled like a Queen.”

“And yet all that now remains of her,” said Edward Wilford, “is her mere name, and the pictured pomp of this decaying panel.”

“And the good lands which have now come to Sir Richard, as well as her portrait,” replied the housekeeper, “and which I take to be of

more value than either of them : and there, look at that fine picture of a warrior, clad, as Sir Richard says, in haubergeon and greaves, with those iron gloves upon his hands ; and he holds a lance with a banner at the top of it. Does not he still look formidable in his dusty and worm-eaten frame ? That is the picture of the great Sir Arthur Southwell, who fought with Edward the Black Prince at the battle of Poitiers, as you may see by the word ‘Poitiers,’ painted in large letters upon a label on that cloud in the sky. And don’t you see there the town too, all with walls and battlements ; and the steeple of the church seems to stand upon the top of Sir Walter’s head, and the river seems to run along the summit of the hills ; it is a beautiful back-ground to be sure, as Sir Richard says, and just as natural as life.”

Next to this picture hung a long line of goodly personages, whose names Mistress Deborah severally repeated. The originals of these curious pieces had in their day flourished,

married, sat for their portraits, and died like other mortals ; and some of them had played a more conspicuous part, having risen to the summit of power, having been toppled down thence, committed to the Tower, and lost their heads, "like a family of distinction," during many generations, and especially whilst the contests of the Red and White Rose deluged the country in blood.

The largest and the finest picture in the room, was next pointed out by Mistress Deborah. It was not a family-piece, but a portrait of "Bluff King Hal" himself, from the pencil of Hans Holbien. In this picture, the King was seen in all his bulk of flesh and buckram ; his bull neck bare, his broad face and high ears surmounted by a cap of black velvet encircled with jewels, stuck on one side the head, with a single white feather depending towards the shoulder ; his right arm a-kimbo, his left hand upon the hilt of his sword. He stood, with his legs striding far apart the one from the other, in full



majesty; and so admirable had the skill of the painter conveyed to the canvass that expression of countenance which distinguished the original, that Henry looked awful and absolute as if (as Mistress Deborah observed) he could walk out of his frame, and with a kick of his foot send headlong to the Tower, and to the block, any one who should dare to question the supremacy of his portrait,—and still more so if they should dare to question his own, as head of the Church.

There was also another regal picture, which Mistress Deborah informed Edward had been presented to Sir Richard Southwell but very lately, as an especial mark of favour from the Queen herself. This was the portraits of Mary and her husband Philip of Spain, both painted together on one canvass. The royal pair, according to the housekeeper's explanation, were represented in a chamber of the Savoy palace; through a window in the background might be seen Paul's Cathedral.

Queen Mary was seated in a chair; her stern and swarthy countenance, so remarkably characterised by a very prominent lump in the forehead above either eyebrow, looked as disagreeable as bigotry, fretfulness, and cruelty, could make it. Her head, covered by a small projecting cap, arose from out a square collar, that sat quite close up about her face; and her whole person, with a very long and small waist, appeared as rigid, stiff, and unbending, as her own severe and narrow mind. Philip was seen standing near her, with all the morose pride and gravity that distinguished his character expressed in his countenance; and in front of them was seen a couple of little dogs reposing very lovingly together. These might have been introduced by the flattering pencil of the artist as an emblem of the conjugal sociability and affection of the Queen and King; but there were not wanting persons who whispered among themselves (for when was there ever a court without the whisper of sarcasm and scandal?)

that, had the painter introduced a dog and a cat in the foreground of his piece, it would much better have expressed the conjugal felicity of the royal pair.

We pass over many other pictures upon which Mistress Deborah descanted in a manner equally edifying and curious. Judges, she said, there were, some of whom had themselves fallen by the very laws they had so long administered to others; Churchmen, whose robes and beads were the most conspicuous parts of their ministry; and some who had become bishops before they were divines; whilst here and there was seen an antiquated virgin of this noble house, whose pinched features, and stiff and stately gait, were alone sufficient to keep at an awful distance all advances to make them wives.

Above the vast chimney was seen the portrait of Sir Richard Southwell, the present representative of this ancient family. It was esteemed an excellent likeness, and scarcely

could there have been found a better subject for the pencil of any artist, from the times of Hans Holbein or Vandyke, down to those of Harlow or Lawrence. Sir Richard, at the date of our narration, was about sixty years old; but this portrait had been executed nearly ten years before, and the painter had not failed to give in it that intellectual expression of countenance so remarkable in the original. The forehead was high, the nose slightly aquiline, whilst the mouth had that character of flexibility and sweetness always indicative of an amiable temper. The beard was represented full above the upper lips, but cut short round the chin, and served as a fringe to form the finishing ornament of the face. The beard and hair were both of a rich chesnut brown, and gave a fine contrast to the clear and healthy complexion of the countenance. Sir Richard appeared in this picture in the dress that he had worn on his presentation as Ambassador from England to

the Emperor Charles the Fifth. It consisted of a rich purple velvet doublet, striped with gold embroidery, and a short cloak of the same material falling over the shoulders, and partly concealing the arms. A massive chain of gold, commonly worn by persons of distinction at this period, hung round the neck, and a square collar of the finest lace encircled the throat. The long and narrow waist was confined by a girdle studded with jewels, and on the right side depended a splendid pouch for the purpose of containing money.

Deborah was eloquent in her remarks on this picture, for she was much attached to her master; nor did her eloquence meet the ear of an indifferent listener, for Edward found so strong a resemblance both in the character of Sir Richard's features and their expression, to his beloved Arabella, that he stood gazing upon the portrait with feelings of deep interest, whilst the housekeeper made sundry shrewd remarks on the original, expressed with

a good deal of freedom, as there was now no third person in the gallery to attend to her discourse.

“Every body,” she said, “knew her master to be very learned; he was serious and grave in his manners; so to be sure was every true English gentleman. He was a great statesman, or else such a man as King Henry the Eighth would not have made him, as he did, so often an ambassador, keeping Sir Richard abroad for years together;—a thing, as she thought, most specially to be wondered at, inasmuch as Sir Richard had never liked the business of the King’s putting away his Queen Catharine;—so to be sure Henry must have thought him the wisest person to do his affairs in foreign courts, else it was no better than banishing him from England for so many years. Sir Richard,” she averred, “could talk Latin and Greek like his mother-tongue; yet he was not in the habit of drawing out Latin sentences from his lips,” she continued, “as

some other learned folks did, just as conjurors draw ribands out of their mouths at a fair. He had some faults, that she must say, but who was without them? He was a rigid Papist, like his deceased friend Sir Thomas More. And she did think Sir Richard was to be blamed for letting Friar John lead him, so much as the Friar did, by the nose. And that though in the main Sir Richard Southwell was as honest, and as kind, and as tender, and as charitable a man as one would desire to see on a summer's day, yet he was much too sore (she thought) against heretics, Lutherans, and such like refuse, as Friar John called them."

Here Mistress Deborah's eloquence was interrupted by the opening of the door, and the subject of her somewhat free (but not altogether unjust) remarks entered the apartment. The housekeeper gave a hem! and said aloud, "There's not a wiser man in the Queen's dominions than my master, and a great gentleman he is, to be sure; and one that serves the Pope

to her Grace's utmost wish; and so I give you a good-morrow, Master Edward."

And making her curtsey to Wilford, and a formal obeisance to her master, Mistress Deborah retired, and shut the door of the gallery.

Sir Richard bowed coldly to Wilford, and slightly apologised for having detained him so long, stating that some business of a public nature had occupied his attention till the present moment. Wilford, naturally proud and irritable, felt both the coldness of his reception and the slight manner in which the apology was offered as a marked affront; and, returning Sir Richard's salutation in a way equally cold and distant, assured him that nothing but necessity had induced him to become an intruder at Wellminster Hall.

"My business, indeed," said Edward, "relates merely to the official station of Sir Richard Southwell, since I come to him only as he is the sheriff of Canterbury."

"And what may it be your pleasure to re-



quire of me?" said Sir Richard. "I shall willingly listen to the suit."

"My suit is a painful one, painful indeed to the feelings of a son," answered Edward; "I come to ask your leave to see my father."

"My leave to see your father!" exclaimed Sir Richard with surprise—"why, where is he?"

"In prison," said Edward; and unable to suppress the acute feelings that arose in his bosom from the mere mention of the circumstance, all his pride forsook him, and, though in the presence of Sir Richard Southwell, he burst into tears. Whatever were the feelings of Wilford, those of Sir Richard were certainly of a far more extraordinary nature, though they might be less acute. At the communication of this intelligence he turned pale, and appeared extremely agitated, and hastily exclaimed, "Good God! how is this? I came down but last night from Whitehall; I knew nothing of this matter."

"It is nevertheless but too true," said Wil-

ford ; “ my father is at this moment a prisoner in Canterbury Castle, and, I fear, in peril of his life, since Thornton the Suffragan Bishop of Dover has accused him of heresy.”

“ I feared it, I feared it would end so,” said Sir Richard ; “ I knew it would come to this ;” and he added, in great agitation, “ What can be done for him ?”

“ Nothing, I fear,” replied Edward Wilford, “ if Thornton has the handling of his case. But perhaps something might be effected in behalf of my poor father, if an appeal could be admitted from him to Cardinal Pole. The Cardinal is a man so mild and moderate in his measures, that it is to be hoped the goodness and innocence of my father’s life would influence him to show what mercy he could ; and to my father’s character, you, Sir Richard, can bear an honourable testimony.”

Sir Richard shook his head, and sighed as he said, “ No, that appeal would be useless, since Thornton acts by a commission from the Privy

Council, to which is affixed her Grace's sign manual. There is but one way to save him."

"What is it?" inquired Wilford.

"He must recant," said Sir Richard Southwell.

"My father recant!" exclaimed Wilford, as the blood rushed into his face; "no! he would rather perish than give the lie to his own conscience. It is true he was a friend to Cranmer, but not to Cranmer's recantation. He will follow his example in his death, but never in his weakness. I know my father, he is patient of injury, but not to be shaken in the firmness of his spirit. Will you give me the permission to see him in his prison?"

"I will do it instantly," said Sir Richard; "I will do all I can to serve him—if it were possible, to save him;—I will think upon it. But I fear—surely persuasion might affect him. He would not refuse to listen to conviction. His conscience would not be offended; such a refusal must be madness."

“ I believe,” replied Edward Wilford, “ that you, Sir Richard, were once the beloved friend of Sir Thomas More ; he gave his head to the block for the sake of conscience, yet he was a persecutor of the people of my father’s faith. The Church of Rome considered him a martyr in her cause, since he died to uphold the supremacy of the Pontiff. And why should you think it madness, that a member of the Reformed Church should do as much for the sake of conscience ?”

“ Sir Thomas More died for the truth,” said Sir Richard, “ not from an obstinate persistence in error.”

“ I might answer you,” replied Wilford, “ even by your own argument ; but my purpose here is not to talk but to act. Give me the licence to see my father, and I will thank you and depart. Hereafter, Sir Richard Southwell, we may meet on an occasion very different from the present.”

Sir Richard was writing at a table that

stood in the apartment, an order for Edward Wilford to see his father, when, at hearing these last words, he looked up, and the expression in Edward's face of that contest of angry and ill-suppressed feeling that agitated his bosom appeared evident, but he did not choose to notice it at the present moment, and continued writing. The door of the apartment opened, when Friar John De Villa Garcina entered the gallery. Wilford trembled with emotion; but, unwilling to renew the quarrel of the morning in the presence of Sir Richard Southwell, he stood erect and faced the Friar, but without speaking.

Father John came immediately up to Southwell, and said, somewhat unceremoniously, "Sir Richard, I have been waiting till the persons you were engaged with but now on business should have departed. I am in haste, and would speak with you this moment."

Sir Richard Southwell looked vexed; he excused himself to the Friar, promised to attend him in a few minutes, and hesitated a

little as he spoke. It was evident to Wilford that John had an absolute ascendancy, and did not suffer it to slumber, over the mind of his patron; since Sir Richard was certainly embarrassed by his presence, like a boy when his schoolmaster comes unexpectedly upon him, and finds him engaged in mischief. "I shall have concluded the affair that engages me with this gentleman almost immediately," said Sir Richard to his confessor, "and then I will attend you."

"Does that gentleman's affairs concern *you alone*, Sir Richard?" said Friar John, as he threw himself into a chair, and looked Edward boldly in the face.

"His affair is with me," answered Sir Richard very quickly; and he added, in a manner that showed his anxiety to satisfy his confessor, "the father of Master Edward Wilford, I grieve to say it, is in much trouble, and he came hither to gain a licence of me to visit his parent in prison."

"It is most likely, then," said Friar John,

“that this gentleman has already forgotten the business that made him the companion of your daughter’s walk but this morning, in the woods of Wellminster.”

“What do you mean, Father?” exclaimed Sir Richard, in the utmost astonishment; and turning to Edward Wilford, he continued, “Is this true? Have you dared to seek the company of my daughter, after the prohibition you so long since received from me? If you have done so, after your solemn promise to quit your vain and wicked pursuit of my child, you are false and dishonourable indeed; and at this moment, such conduct is both ungrateful and indecorous. I beg you to be explicit; if the holy father is mistaken in what he asserts, I shall be glad to learn that I censure you unjustly, and I shall stand corrected for a sudden burst of feeling, for which I would ask your forgiveness.”

“Speak this moment,” said the Friar to Wilford: “you dare not deny the truth.”

“I dare refuse to answer you,” replied Wil-

ford warmly, "and that the experience of this morning may perhaps make you remember: but to Sir Richard Southwell I am nothing loth to speak the truth. I have seen Arabella."

"This effrontery is beyond bearing," exclaimed Sir Richard; "your interview with me, then, I must think, was merely a subterfuge."

"It was none, Sir Richard," answered Edward. "I met your daughter by chance in my way hither; but, by what means the circumstance became known to this Spanish friar is beyond my conjecture, since I saw no one near us in the wood."

"And did you dare," said Sir Richard,—  
"but I will not, I cannot think you would dare to call to her remembrance what must for ever blot her fame,—her former unhappy connexion with you."

"Forbear the question, Sir Richard," said the Friar; "it will be vain. Do you think that he will deal honestly in this matter, after the conduct of this morning?"



“Do not again provoke me,” exclaimed Wilford, as he looked with scorn upon the Friar. “I disdain falsehood. Sir Richard Southwell, this I have dared—to tell your daughter she is my affianced wife; that in the sight of God, she is mine: and though for the sake of one, who is now no more, I was induced to wave my claim for a time; yet I never have, and never will renounce her whilst I have life, unless it is by her own change of affection. Whilst she is mine in heart, we are bound to each other till death sunders the bond.”

The Friar, at hearing these words, seemed to enjoy a malicious triumph over Wilford; and Sir Richard Southwell, whose astonishment was only equalled by the agony of his feelings, exclaimed, “Oh, most wretched man, accursed in the sight of Heaven for thy own and thy father’s rebellion against the faith of the only true Church, dost thou come to fill my heart with misery; to mislead, to steal from me perhaps my child; to destroy her in soul and body by thy

horrid blasphemies, should thy fatal doctrines infect her mind?" Sir Richard sunk into a chair. Every thought, every feeling seemed to give way before the terrific images that superstition had raised before him, to fright him with the dreadful phantom of its creation. He saw in that vision nothing but Wilford the favoured lover, the future husband of Arabella, and Wilford a *heretic!* He might render his child the same. Arabella a *heretic!* the thought was worse than death. It was a thought sufficient to rouse him to anger, almost to madness; since the bare word implied, in the anxious father's mind, the loss of his daughter's happiness to all eternity.

"Young man," said Sir Richard, "hear me! If you are lost to every sense of honour, to every feeling of pity for the pangs which your words have this day inflicted on a father's heart, yet, for the sake of Arabella, for her sake alone, I do beseech you, nay I implore you, to think of her no more. If you are deaf to truth, and an

outcast from God's law yourself, do not make her a participator in your own misery in this life, and in that which is to come. I have done you one kind act this day; do not repay it with ingratitude."

"I should be base indeed," replied Wilford, "could I deceive you. I cannot renounce the voluntary oath I gave that binds me to your daughter; but of this rest assured, I shall do nothing rashly. I would entreat you to give me the order to see my father, and to let me depart."

"Do not, do not give it," said Friar John. "Sir Richard, it does not become you to encourage the intercourse of heretics."

"You, at least," said Wilford haughtily to the Friar, "may show some forbearance in this point, since it ill becomes you to injure my father more than you have done already. You are to occupy his place; whilst he, to make room for you, is cast into a prison. Show some forbearance then, I would entreat you."

“I do; I have shown forbearance,” said the Friar, with an assumed air of patience; “I have not repeated the circumstances of our meeting this morning, before you gained admission to the house.”

“What circumstance?—what passed?” inquired Sir Richard.

“It is of no moment,” replied the Friar; “I would spare that young man. I would not irritate your mind against him, however he may deserve it at my hands. I would spare him.”

“Do not spare me,” cried Edward; “say all the truth, say what you will, I am prepared to meet it.”

“I can bear my own injuries,” continued the Friar; “but when I learned from the old park-keeper, who observed you when you thought yourself unnoticed, that you had made this interview with Sir Richard Southwell but a pretext to gain one with his daughter, I could not delay to acquaint him with it.”

“It is infamous,” exclaimed Southwell,

“dishonourable, cruel, thus to play with my feelings, and to tamper with the obedience of my child. Quit my house, and never let me see your face again, or you will force me to take harsher measures than I would willingly adopt.”

“Give me the order, and I will instantly depart,” said Edward.

“I will not give it,” cried Southwell. “Be-gone, young man! quit my sight!”

“Think, Sir Richard,” said Edward; “think what you do; can *you* refuse so poor a service to my father,—to him who was once your dearest friend,—to Owen Wilford?”

The mention of the venerable Owen’s name in a manner so emphatic by his son, seemed to act like a charm to subdue for a while the angry spirit of Sir Richard Southwell; and he said, in a calmer voice, “No, no; as far as my conscience will allow me, I am bound indeed to serve your father. Take the order to see him, and, in God’s name, depart my house.”

“I thank you for it,” said Edward; “for the present, my poor father’s afflictions occupy my whole heart. But we must meet hereafter; till then, Sir Richard, I bid you farewell.”

Edward departed, and Friar John proceeded to enter into a private conference with Sir Richard, the result of which will appear in a future chapter.

## CHAPTER VIII.

No sooner had Edward Wilford possessed himself of the order to gain admission into Canterbury Castle, than he hastily quitted the house of Sir Richard Southwell. With a mind fraught with anxious reflections, and a heart agitated by conflicting feelings, he at length reached the prison-gates. And so wholly was he absorbed in the expectation of once more embracing his parents in their afflictions, that, as he entered the gaol, he did not remark a man who was quitting it at the same moment, and who eyed him narrowly with the utmost attention. We must now leave Edward Wilford for a time to enjoy the melancholy solace of this interview with his father, whilst we say

something of the person who had so observingly recognized him.

This was no other than lawyer Cluny, the pettifogging attorney, who had lately been raised, by the recommendation of Bishop Bonner, to fill the post of secretary to the Suffragan of Dover, an active and acute man of the law being considered as absolutely necessary to assist the Commission. When Cluny had thus quitted the Castle as Edward Wilford entered it, instead of walking straight forward with that air of exactness, precision, and gravity, that seemed to say he trod even the King's highway according to law, he paused, and appeared to be considering within himself the discussion of some knotty point.

At length Cluny gave a sudden nod of the head, which, like the fall of the hammer of an auctioneer, indicated that the thing in question was knocked down, or settled past revocation; and, in eager haste, he set forward with a far less dignified air, than usually accompanied the



movements of this excellent tail of the law ; for thus was the respectable Cluny designated by many impertinent persons in Canterbury. Cluny now bent his steps towards the house of Sir Francis Morgan. Of this young man, the reader may possibly remember, Rose had spoken to her brother as a person of whom she entertained some suspicions, as having been instrumental in the accusations so suddenly brought against her father. We shall take leave, therefore, to outstep the attorney ; and, whilst he is on the road, as he would express it, to the house of the said Morgan, conduct the reader thither before him, to gain some acquaintance with the knight in question.

Sir Francis Morgan was tall, and of a well-formed person. In his countenance there was nothing that could be found fault with, if the features which composed it were separately examined ; yet, somehow or other, they were not well put together, since, viewed in combination, they produced an expression neither handsome

nor agreeable, and not at all calculated to give the observer a favourable opinion of the man. His eyes were bright but small; and as he had a habit of turning them into the corner close under the eyelid, when he looked at another, it gave a sly and cunning character to his face. His eyebrows were full, and started up towards the temples, in that kind of raised arch which modern craniologists designate as the sign or organ of *colour*, and to which the learned Dr. Spurzheim pronounces all eminent painters may lay claim, as their own peculiar property or distinction. Whether Morgan had any skill, or eye, for colour, except it might be such as it suited his purpose to give to his own actions, is beyond our power to declare. Be this as it may, he had fine white teeth—no small addition to good looks; and a curling head of hair of rich auburn, with a pointed beard of the same colour, were so decidedly handsome, that no doubt could exist of their being highly

favourable to set off the hues of his naturally good complexion.

Morgan had received a university-education. He was acute and subtle in argument, and *could* be a gentleman in manners whenever he thought it necessary to put himself under such a restraint; but as he had associated much with persons whose claim to that distinction was very doubtful, he did not often give himself the trouble to put such a curb upon the licence of his own humour. Morgan had been some time a student at Oxford, afterwards a traveller, and of late one of Queen Mary's honorary band of gentleman ushers, and a gallant whom Mary herself had singularly honoured and dignified with knighthood. His father, Judge Morgan, had pronounced the sentence of death which consigned the unhappy Lady Jane Dudley to the block; and not long after the tragical fate of that amiable woman, the son of her judge was taken into favour at court. Sir Francis

Morgan was now gaily dressed in the extremity of the fashion of the period. His doublet was of light blue velvet, made close up to the throat, with small lapels falling over the shoulders, where the under-dress with long sleeves of white satin became visible; a chain of gold hung round his neck, and a small square collar of fine lace, with the like finish about his wrists, completed the attire of the young courtier.

He was now seated at a table, enjoying a choice flagon of foreign wine; and, filling out a cup, he turned to his companion (a young man of his own age, but whose attire, less handsome and much the worse for wear, indicated an inferior condition) and said carelessly, "Sam Collins, give us a pledge, and don't sit there as dull and as chop-fallen as a broken-down pawnbroker in Whitefriars, when he finds that he has lent his money upon copper spoons, mistaking them for gold ones."

"I have some cause to be dull, I think," replied Samuel Collins; "Captain Spurcrop's

cock beat the old black one clean out of the pit, though his cock hung in the mat before the setters could get the bird on ; and so I doubled stakes, for you said that if the devil himself should put him on a cock's-comb and spurs, he could never beat old Rooper ; and so, you see, relying upon your judgment, as I said before, I doubled stakes and——”

“ And lost, like a fool as you are, Sammy,” said Morgan. “ Why, man, I only said so as a blind, because Spurcrop's adversary was within hearing, and we all thought him raw and a greenhorn ; and I wanted the Captain to gain the odds, for I owe him a good turn.”

“ And why did not you tell me so ; and why did not you come to the pit yourself then, when the battle was fought ?” inquired the disappointed gambler.

“ I come to the pit, Sam ! I league with cock-fighters, sharpers, and fellows like yourself !” said Morgan ; “ you are quite mistaken there, Collins. I am a changed man. A

changed man, did I say? I am a new man altogether."

"I do not know what you mean," answered Sam Collins; "but all I do know is, that thinking there was not in England a better judge of a game-cock than yourself, I laid my odds on the bird you pronounced no flincher; and so I lost my money."

"Never mind that, Sam," said Morgan; "it shall be no loss to you in the end. For, as my father the Judge used to say, when he gave his charge to the jury; 'If ye follow my view of the law, gentlemen, though ye may do wrong, the fault shall not be yours; since, taking my view of the law, ye do your duty.' And so you, Samuel Collins, having lost by the law that I laid down respecting the old bird, shall do yourself no wrong, seeing it was your duty to follow where I led. I will make up your odds, and render them more than even, if you, for the present, will leave the company of those

lads of the feather, and aid me with your best services."

"I don't know what you mean," again repeated Collins. "You are too deep for me; so please to speak plain."

"Why, then, I will do so in your own language, Sammy," replied Sir Francis. "I am in for Making or Marring; Black and White is the game now. And look yonder, and see the gear that I have to fit me for my new condition!"

Samuel Collins looked very attentively at a side table, to which Morgan pointed with his finger. "There 's neither dice-box," said he, "nor dice, nor a card, nor a raquet there; I see nothing."

"You see nothing?" exclaimed Morgan; rising up and going towards the table; "there lies that which is worth them all just now; look at that, my gay clerk of St. Nicholas!"

"Why, what the devil do you mean by

that?" said Collins; "you are not for a mumming, are you? You are too old to play the Boy-Bishop, I trow; this is nothing but a priest's toy, a rosary."

"A priest's treasury, you mean," replied Morgan. "His God, his nayword, his mask, through the mumming of this goodly farce, called the world. And *this*, Sammy,—*this* shall be the making of me; for I told you, just now, I was in for Making or Marring. *This* shall get me a wife."

"A wife!" exclaimed Collins; "why, priests' trinkets are not things to get wives by in Queen Moll's days, I fancy. She is a right true friend to liberty. She bids your married clergy turn their wives adrift, or bear a faggot with them for the transgression of having shared their bondage and their sin."

"But I am no priest, nor like to be one," said Morgan; "and once more, I tell you, this rosary is my passport to Hymen's temple, though it wars against heathens as well as



heretics. And look how I am sorted for my enterprise! There is my rosary, quite enough to make an oath pass for an honest profession, if I do but swear by it in these days. "There is a bright new mass-book."

"Why, you know little or nothing about the meaning of that, Sir Francis," observed Collins.

"So much the better," replied Morgan; "that puts me on a par with half the priests; for ignorance is the staff upon which the Pope himself leans for support. There is my manual for fasts and feasts, pilgrimages, offerings, and confessions. I have also a box of wax-lights just sent in from the chandler's; every one of them shall blaze before the shrine,—I mean the altar, once more set up to Beckett, in Canterbury; and I stand a saint in the new Calendar, only waiting canonization."

"And what are you to get by all this, I should like to know?" inquired Collins; "a fool is paid for bearing a bauble; and, I sup-

pose, you do not intend to carry yours for nothing?"

"Thy sagacity has been most wonderfully exercised to find out that, Sammy," replied Morgan; "when I told you but just now, I am become a zealous Papist, in order to get me a wife. I am determined to have her. She is young, beautiful, rich, and the daughter of Sir Richard Southwell, a furious bigot; and I will hunt out, burn, roast, and grill every heretic in Canterbury, but I will win his favour to carry off the wench that pleases my eye, and would suit my purse, which is something on the decline since I kept company with you, Sammy, and your worshipful associates."

"And do you think, that Sir Richard Southwell will give his only daughter to such a spendthrift as you are," said Collins, "such a lad of the turf, the tennis-court, and the cock-pit?"

"Sir Richard has been much in foreign parts," replied Morgan, "and knows little of

my early life; and besides that, Queen Mary has spread the gracious wing of her protection over me, and my zeal for the Church, that shall presently appear, will all plead in my behalf. Add to which, I have embraced, and entertain a most warm friendship for a godly man who is sworn to serve me, Friar John de Villa Garcina."

"Friar John!" exclaimed Collins, with astonishment; "and what is he to get out of you? for he works for no man, I trow, without his pennyworth for his penny. The odds must be clearly on his side, before he would double a stake."

"A most true calculation," said Morgan, "and I am to repay the services of Friar John by means that nothing concern you in the present case. You will take your part in my affairs under my direction; you shall lack no reward."

"And what must I do?" inquired Collins.

"That must in some measure depend on

circumstances," replied Morgan. "One part of your duty will be an observance of decent manners till I am married, and don't want you; another part will be, to act as a messenger between myself, Sir Richard, and my sweetheart, Mistress Arabella; and lastly and chiefly, to do whatever I may direct, to swear to whatever I may swear to, to be a witness to whatever I may require you as a witness, to vouch for the morality of my character, to say yes to whatever I will have yes, and no to whatever I declare shall be no, and——"

"To wear a straw in my shoe, walk Fleet-ditch, ready to kiss the cross for a groat even in the very teeth of the pillory," cried Collins. "I thank you, Master Morgan, for such goodly promotion. Why you would make a rogue and a sharper of me at once."

"That's quite beyond my power, Sammy," said Sir Francis, "seeing the thing is already done to my hand; since there is not a bear-ward, nor a cock-setter, nor a sticker of bills

for lost goods on Paul's Cross, but will give thee a character for excellence in all the roguery that falls within the ken of their vocations. But come, man, never flinch; I will apparel thee in new braveries. Do me but good service till the business I have at heart shall be settled, and I will pay thee ten times more than thou canst hope for thy exertions."

"I'll have something down," said Sam Collins; "and if I am to be thus employed, I will have wherewithal to hansom my new calling; I will not trust you."

"Not trust me, Sammy?" replied Sir Francis; "why, surely you strangely forget yourself. Remember, Samuel, to whom you are indebted for that precious neck of thine being still unstretched upon thy shoulders. Had not I stood thy friend, the follower of Sir Thomas Wyatt had long since graced the gallows, after his noble master was beheaded for a rebel. Did not I swear, that when the Kentish rascals broke into Gardi-

ner's house in Southwark, and plundered his plate and goods, that thou wast with me in Canterbury, when all the time I knew you were the very man that stole Winchester's cross that had the diamond in the centre of it?"

"Well, and have not I done as good service to you, Sir Francis?" said Collins. "When you and the wild boys of the City dressed up the cat like a friar ready to say mass, and hanged the animal in Cheap, who but me got the 'prentice lads brought before the Star-Chamber, and had them well whipped too, on bare suspicion of the fact? Who did this but Samuel Collins, and all to hide your share in that frolic, that might otherwise have ended warmly for you; since the Star-Chamber, could they have brought it home, would have made Smithfield smoke again with the punishment of the transgression?"

"There is no need, however," answered Morgan, "thus to repeat our mutual services to each other. My affairs are already in a

pretty train, since the Queen has recommended me to Sir Richard Southwell, as a proper son-in-law to support the honours of his ancient house. There is only one thing I fear, before our bargain is struck:—Sir Richard may be pleased to call upon me for a sight of my rent-roll, title-deeds, and expectations. Such a call would something puzzle even my policy, since the rent-roll has suffered inroads and gashes; many a bull's horn and a bear's foot hath made a hole in it. The title-deeds are mostly in the hands of the Israelites, who accommodate young gentlemen at their need. And as for expectations, there stands a sad block in the way of them: first, my father is alive, and never takes physic; secondly, I have not hitherto succeeded in persuading my worshipful cousin, Edward Wilford, to get himself hanged, burnt, or beheaded; for if *he* were but out of the way, Sir Francis Morgan might write himself next heir to one of the best entailed estates in all England, the certain

future possessor of it, whenever it shall please the devil to carry off his old uncle, Sir John Mordaunt, already tottering on the brink of the grave."

"You took good pains, I believe," said Collins, "to embroil your cousin Edward in Wyatt's affair. You made me join Sir Thomas in the hope to entrap Wilford."

"I did so," answered Morgan. "I used thee, Sammy, as an old wife does her chalk egg that she puts into the nest, that it may lead the hens to follow and lay to it. Thy joining Wyatt, I thought, would be a sure bait to Wilford,—a sure sign that I next meant to follow him, and that the arguments I held out were sincere. But Edward was too shy, too prudent to be wholly caught, although he did fall into one trap of my contrivance."

"What was that?" inquired Collins; "surely he never took up arms to join Wyatt and the Kentish rebels?"

"I grant he did not," replied Morgan,



“but he did what was almost as bad. He answered the letters that I contrived Sir Thomas Wyatt should write to him, and so fell into a private correspondence with a man who soon after lost his head for treason.”

“I wonder how such a prudent fellow as Edward Wilford is in State matters, could have been so easily caught to do even that,” observed Collins; “I thought that he always mistrusted you.”

“But we trapped him by an artifice,” said Morgan; “we made him believe that the Princess Elizabeth was the sole object of Wyatt’s plot, and that no personal injury was meditated against her sister Mary; but only to save Elizabeth from the fate Gardiner was aiming to bring upon her, and to preserve this realm from becoming a furnace to the Reformers, we wished not only to prevent the Spanish match, but to place Elizabeth on the throne.”

“I suppose, then, it was on this subject

that Edward Wilford corresponded with Wyatt?" said Collins.

"There you are quite right, Sammy," continued Morgan. "Edward Wilford, fired with ardour at the thought of becoming a *cavaliero servente* to the young Princess, whom we made him believe, and with truth, that the Papists were labouring to destroy. He would save Elizabeth, he would spend the last drop of his blood in her defence. You never saw a more ready or hot-headed champion."

"And what made him draw back then," inquired Collins, "after going so far as this?"

"Why, because he found out," continued Morgan, "that Wyatt was at heart a mere rebel, and a very weak-headed one too; and that his first intention, if he proved *successful*, was to deal with Mary after her own way of making things sure. The Tower and the axe are certain remedies to silence the tongue, and put down the title of man or woman, should either become troublesome."

“ And so Wilford gave up all thoughts of joining Wyatt, I suppose ?” said Collins.

“ He did so,” replied Morgan ; “ and soon after went abroad in the dumps, for a cause I could never learn. And as to myself, Mary took me into favour when I least expected it. So I became loyal, and helped Wyatt, as you know, to the scaffold. And as for Edward Wilford, he is still alive, I hear, at Frankfort ; and therefore the old block between me and the Mordaunt estate stands as fast as ever.”

“ ’Tis pity,” said Collins, “ but what you could get him to England ; he might then be easily caught ; for his father, I hear, was yesterday laid in limbo, by Thornton, for a charge of heresy ; and these are blessed times to give one an opportunity of getting rid of a stumbling-block, whilst proclamations and commissions daily come out thick upon each other, and so severe, that a man may be informed against, and entrapped, just as much for what he does *not* do, as for what he *does*

do. Thus, not going to confession, or not walking in a procession on a Saint's day, is enough to hang or burn any man, though he be as honest as a judge."

"As honest as a judge *ought* to be, you mean, Sammy," said Morgan; "for judges now must chime into the same tune with the Court, and so must the jurymen too, or woe be to them; for if they run counter, the Star-Chamber comes down upon them with a spanking fine for acquitting the prisoner, as it did in Winter and Throgmorton's case.\* They should have had my father for their judge; for, as he says — 'Gentlemen of the Jury, her Grace's pleasure being to see justice administered in these realms, it would ill become us, who are her Grace's

\* Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, being tried as an accomplice in Sir Thomas Wyatt's rebellion, was acquitted by the jury, for want of evidence to convict him. And for this acquittal the jury were severely fined and imprisoned by order of the Star-Chamber.— See Burnet and Fox.

servants, and here represent her most sacred person, to do other than her Grace herself would do. Therefore, viewing the offence before us as she would view it, and understanding the law as her Grace would understand it, I pronounce the prisoner guilty.'—That 's what I call a wise judge, Sammy, and one who will always be an honest man—at Court. But we are rambling in our talk from the purpose. I forgot to tell you,—but first get up and open the door, for somebody is rapping upon it.”

Samuel Collins immediately obeyed, and, on opening the door of the apartment, lawyer Cluny walked in.

“ A good-day to you, Master Attorney,” said Sir Francis. “ You are ever most welcome to me, since I never see your face unless you come to get something out of me, by getting something for me. To what cause may I attribute the pleasure of this visit ?”

Cluny looked at Collins, as he said that he

had some little business that perhaps Sir Francis might desire to hear in private."

"If you mean, Master Attorney," replied Sir Francis, "that Sam Collins ought to be put out of the room before you speak, I may tell you that he is a part of myself: he obeys me as my hand obeys the will of my head. I have him all my own, as well as I have you, Cluny. Is it not true? have I not bought you, body and soul, Sammy?"

Cluny still looked doubtful. "Why," continued Morgan, "if I bid Sammy sit down in the corner and not hear our discourse, he will presently become a joint-stool, with no more ears, life, or motion about him than the block upon which he sits; and, giving up his mind to a notable train of calculation, away he goes in thought to the bull-yard, the bear-garden, or the cock-pit, and never awakes out of his reverie till a flap on the ears or a douce on the chops brings him back again to a sense of passing objects. Sammy is the best of all counsel-

keepers, since, if he should even betray them, he is so known a liar that nobody will credit his tale; therefore, I choose him for my friend, agent, and bosom-counsellor."

"A most prudent choice," said Cluny, grinning; "and with these premises taken for the surety of his secrecy in your matters, I suppose I may proceed to open the case."

"By all means," answered Morgan.

"Why then," continued Cluny, "I have rare news for you. Whom do you think I this day crossed as he entered Canterbury Castle?"

"How, in the devil's name can I guess," answered Morgan, "unless it might be the Evil One himself, who very naturally came to salute you, Cluny, as a brother, whilst taking a turn in Canterbury to pay his respects to Thornton and other of his particular friends?"

"I saw a man quite as evil to you, Sir Francis, as the devil himself might be," said Cluny. "Edward Wilford brushed by my elbow as I came out of the Castle."

“ And is he in Canterbury Castle at last ? ” exclaimed Morgan, snapping his fingers ; “ then there ’s that for his claim to the Mordaunt property.” And a second snap of the fingers accompanied these words.

“ He is not there as a prisoner,” replied Cluny. “ His father’s being laid up may account for the son going thither, probably to visit him. But I did not know till to-day that he was in England, or in Canterbury Castle.”

“ But you can find the means to keep him there, and to make him become a prisoner,” said Morgan ; “ or of what avail is all the knowledge of statutes and proclamations with which you have crammed your brains ? ”

“ Something might be done by way of writ of detainer,” replied Cluny. “ But, before I proceed farther, however much that respectable gentleman, Master Samuel Collins, may resemble a joint-stool, I must positively insist upon his leaving the room, since he may not keep my counsel quite so well as he does yours.”



“ Well, you shall be satisfied,” said Morgan. “ So, do you, Sammy, walk off for the present ; and, if you have nothing better to do, stroll into the cathedral, and kneel down amongst the old women that set up their candle-ends before the new altar to Becket’s memory, run your fingers over a row of cherry-stones on a string that you may buy for twopence, and thus you tell your beads, and establish for yourself a character of penitence and of piety, that may presently serve me, as you are one of my followers ;—so, begone, I say !”

Samuel Collins rose up to depart, though with evident reluctance ; and turned an angry glance upon Cluny, as he considered him the cause of this dismissal.

Morgan called him back again. “ What is your pleasure with me ?” inquired Collins sulkily ; “ am I only to be a joint-stool, to be shifted about, first here, and then there, at every man’s pleasure but your own ?”

“ No, no, Samuel,” said Morgan ; “ all I

would now say is by way of caution. I bid you not presume to look at, or to kiss so much as the tip of the ruff, or the hem of the frows of the pretty little house-damsel that waits below, since she is already designed for the special favour of thy betters.—That 's all, Sammy ;—so, now begone.”

Collins departed. Cluny rose up, and examined the door to see that it was close shut ; then he paused a moment, and opened it again to look without, to satisfy himself that no listeners lurked near the spot. Again he shut the door, and proceeded to take a peep behind the arras, and even to open a large corner-cupboard. “ Why, what the devil are you about, Cluny ?” said Sir Francis ; “ do you fancy yourself surrounded by listeners and spies ?”

“ No,” answered Cluny ; “ but I know how closets and tapestry are used now-a-days. I have, before now, found both could conceal a suspected person when in danger of the laws. Heretics, and makers of false monies, have some-

times owed their lives even to an old hencoop, a copper furnace, or a corner cupboard: witness the case of Mistress Ann—I forget her name—who came under the information of Doctor Argentine, before he left Colchester.”

“Well, all is safe here, at least,” said Morgan; “for listeners would not exactly suit with my social communications with Sam Collins, or Black Sam, as we call him, from the fellow’s raven beard.”

Cluny, now quite satisfied that no one save Morgan could attend to his discourse, sat down at the table, and, as a prelude to it, filled out a cup of wine, and, merely nodding his head to Sir Francis, drank it off. “You make yourself at home, Master Attorney,” said Morgan; and he added, somewhat haughtily, “you must have some rare communication to make, thus to assume upon the subject of it, by taking your stand on a footing rather more familiar than *I* have yet granted to *you*, whatever freedom *I* may have allowed to Collins. But he is of an

order very different from a limb of the law. Collins and I have made kings, queens, and knaves dance before us on the same table; we have trolled the black-eyed white boys from the same box, and that's a thing gives a man a licence to equality all the world over.—But as for you——”

“I mean no offence, no undue liberty,” replied Cluny; “but I have lost breath in posting hither to do you service; so, I presumed to refresh myself by a draught of this excellent Rhenish.”

“Take another, if you will,” said Morgan, “and proceed to your business.”

“Not a drop more,” answered Cluny: “the winebibber is a fool, if not a lost man; since wine often lets out the truth with more ease than even Master Sergeant Twistem's cross-questioning.—I will be brief in my matter, and I crave of you, Sir Francis Morgan, to be serious, since the said matter is specially your own concern. You have often consulted me upon

certain claims that the law gives you to certain properties, estates, and dependencies, now held, on a life tenure only, by Sir John Mordaunt, Knight.”

“And my very good uncle,” said Morgan, “whom I should have heartily wished at the devil long ago, but that Edward Wilford, being also his nephew, and one year older than myself, is the next heir.”

“That is the very point in question,” replied Cluny. “I must have a clear understanding of this business; as it is fitting I ought to have, when professionally engaged on a law consultation. I wish to do my duty by you, and not to take your money for nothing.”

“You have called in yourself, and constituted yourself as head of a professional consultation, as you are pleased to call it,” said Morgan; “but, as I suppose you really have something in the wind to my advantage, you may run your bill upon tick if you will, and set down this conversation as the first charge.”

“ Not quite the *first* charge, as I shall presently show,” answered Cluny, “ since my business for you began yesterday ;—but more of that anon. Let us now proceed to inquire into the title. The said estates, properties and dependencies, it appears, were entailed by will of the late Sir Talbot Mordaunt, Knight, father to the present Sir John Mordaunt, Knight, on his son ; and he (the said Sir John) failing in issue male, the entail still continues ; and at his demise the said entailed estates, properties and dependencies go to the next *eldest* heir *male*, he being also *of kin* to the said Sir John. Did not old Sir Talbot’s will run thus ?”

“ It did,” replied Morgan. “ But do be brief, I pray you, and come at once to the subject of your business.”

“ I am doing so,” answered Cluny ; “ but things must go in a regular course, according to law.—And the aforesaid Sir John Mordaunt, Knight, (still surviving,) had an elder sister, named Alice, which sister, Alice, married one

Owen Wilford, sometime clerk, and now in Canterbury Castle; by which marriage came an heir male, one Edward Wilford, who being born *one year before* the son of the youngest sister, (married to Judge Morgan,) *ergo*, that eldest sister's son becomes next heir to the said Sir John Mordaunt, Knight, before the youngest sister's son, (yourself Sir Francis,) as the afore-said Sir John never has been married, and therefore cannot have issue male, legitimate in the eye of the law. I think I have stated the case very clearly, and that you must perfectly understand me."

"Upon my soul, I could not," said Morgan, "only that I knew what you *meant* to say quite as well as yourself, before you opened your mouth. The whole business might be spoken in two words, without this long harangue."

"Pardon me, Sir Francis," replied Cluny; "the law is precise. We must take every word into consideration; for the omission or admission of one word more or less into a will, might

render null and void (such is the beauty of our laws) all the intents of the testator; as I could prove by sundry cases, and specially one that came under my own management but very lately, whereby I disclaimed a widow and six children, in favour of the rich old Lord of Couvoitise, an alien, a foreigner, and quite a stranger (though a relative) to the party deceased. The case ran thus——”

“ Spare me the recital of it, I beseech you,” said Morgan, interrupting him, “ and only answer me one question. If Edward Wilford were dead, am not I next heir to Sir John Mordaunt, our old uncle ?”

“ Certainly you are,” replied Cluny, “ heir beyond revocation, your uncle having no power to cut off the entail.”

“ But Edward Wilford is alive,” said Morgan, “ and seems likely to live on still; for though I should gladly send him to heaven on the wings of the law, if it were practicable, either by hanging or what not, could the law



trap him, yet I cannot bring myself to knock out his brains, or to get rid of him in the Italian fashion; and so my hopes, as I see, rest but on the chances of nature. I wish the fellow had a fever, or that the sweating sickness or the plague would visit him, or that he would catch the small-pox, and have Doctor Argentine to physic him; for that learned leech fills a church-yard as fast as a hungry heir or a greedy sexton could desire. But my hopes did, I confess, once rest in the expectation that Edward would do something to bring himself within the clutches of the gentleman of the black robe, to get rid of him."

"You are quite right," said Cluny, "in desiring to do all things according to law; that is professional. And your father, the worthy Judge Morgan, used to say, 'Law is the bulwark of governments; judges and individuals, and he who walks under the shadow of it, need not trouble his head about justice or equity,—things to which the ignorant lay claim, as if they were

to take place of the wisest institutions for the support of authority. Give me the *letter of the law*,' says Judge Morgan, 'and leave mercy to the hangman to use it by finding a tough rope, and a gallows that will not break down; so that a man be not hung twice instead of once in his lifetime.' ”

“Your praises of my father,” replied Sir Francis, “are——”

“Are irrelevant, I grant it,” said Cluny; “they have nothing to do with the business before the court,—I mean, before ourselves. I can point out a way to make you heir, both legal, apparent, and direct, to the estates, properties, and dependencies in question, whether your cousin Edward Wilford live or die.”

“Can you do that?” exclaimed Morgan exultingly; “if you can, you can do more than even my father himself could do for me, came it before a court, though he should *sum* up, as well as pack a jury to decide the matter. Prove

your assertion, and I will double, nay treble, every charge you may make.”

“I shall make no charges at all,—that is, no *specific* charges to you,” replied Cluny; “I shall only insert, *Item, to such a consultation on such a date*—leaving a blank for you to fill it up, according as your own generosity and conscience ask the sum: I deal liberally with my friends.”

“I understand,” said Morgan: “in order to make them come down with more cash than you dare specify; to hear their own generosity lauded; and to see you pocket the money, without even causing your nose to blush deeper than it does for very shame. You are a sly dog, Cluny; but I know you, never mind. Out with your plot,—I will pay you for it.”

“Plot!” cried Cluny, “plot!—no plot on my part, I do assure you; only a thing taken in the course of the law. All plots come under the statute against conspiracies. Any person or persons who might conspire, hold together, as-

semble themselves, entertain discussion or discussions, to the manifest prejudice, harm, or injury of——”

“Of the devil!” said Morgan, “by taking his work into their own hands. On with your business, then, in the way of the *law*, and not in the way of a plot; for *law* it shall be for me, and good law too, if it gives me a chance of the Mordaunt property.”

Cluny now looked particularly solemn; and shuffling his hands into his pockets, with much gravity and caution, he said, “I have run no small risk, Sir Francis, even in carrying about me such papers as these, purposely with a view to do you service; and that risk ought to be taken into consideration,—not strictly in law, but certainly in equity.”

“Why, I thought you said just now, and quoted my father for it,” answered Morgan, “that equity had nothing to do in matters of business.”

“Certainly not in the common course of

things," replied Cluny; "but where an equitable consideration bears in with a point directly in law, it should always be respected. That's quite professional, I assure you."

"And it shall now double thy fee, Cluny," said Sir Francis, "if it appears that these papers are really useful to me. Let me see them?"

"Not yet," answered Cluny,—“not yet. I must first premise, that having called upon you, Sir Francis, to bear witness to the fact of my innocence in having them upon me, and the honesty of my intentions in showing them to you, they must, after the forthcoming inspection by you, remain in my hands, at least for the present, as they will become evidence.”

"Evidence, or not, do let us know what they are about," said Morgan; "you get on in this matter like a snail running a race. Why, you would tire the patience even of my father himself, and lull him to sleep with such prosing, before his usual time for taking a nap, when the

prisoner opens his defence. Do let me see them."

"They are dangerous papers,—very dangerous even to handle," replied Cluny; "since, the Saints bless her most gracious Majesty's person and throne! they treat on matters of high treason. They contain letters that passed between that noted rebel, Sir Thomas Wyatt, and your cousin Edward Wilford."

Morgan started up at hearing these words, once more snapped his fingers, danced round the room, and, in his exultation, fairly hugged Cluny with so much vehemence that, as the attorney was but a little man, and his patron a tall one, Morgan ran one of his eyes upon the corner of Cluny's trencher-cap. The extreme pain of the accident in a moment brought him to his senses, and cooled his ecstasy. Morgan swore an oath or two, cursed both Cluny and his cap; then called out that he was a made man, ran to a side table to snatch up an ewer of water to wash his eye, and at length was enabled to go

on with the business. "I beseech you," said the attorney, "to moderate this feeling of ecstasy; it might make against you. It is not at all professional. People who deal in matters of the law should have nothing to do with feelings. It might be brought to prove you were an interested person."

"Why, and so I am an interested person," replied Morgan. "If those papers can be made to hang Edward for high treason, and so make me next heir to the Mordaunt estates, who need be so joyful as I am?"

"They will go well towards hanging him, backed by some other little matters that may appear hereafter, in the due course of time," said Cluny. "But if he is hanged or not, being once found guilty of high treason, though her Majesty should remit the final judgment of the sentence, it will be just as well for you, since the act of treason brings him at once under the statute; and forfeiture of all his personals, lands, goods, chattels, and all thereunto belong-

ing, must follow. And, by a farther clause in the aforesaid statute, any claim he may have *hereafter* to any lands, estates, properties, tenements, or dependencies, in the realm of England, is also forfeited. The clause is specific, and was inserted for the farther prevention of any person or persons meddling in matters of treasonable practice.”

“ Then I am safe ; all must be sure,” said Morgan.

“ It is true,” continued Cluny, “ that the sovereign Lord or Lady, the King or Queen’s Majesty, may remit the fine and capacitate the attainted. But you have so much interest with our gracious Queen, and your father is so loyal and accommodating a judge to the pleasure of the Court, that there can be no doubt that Edward Wilford would have no chance of receiving the royal pardon, if the case is well got up. Much, and indeed I may say all, depends on the legal management of the thing ; and I am your attorney.”



“ You are my angel, Cluny,” cried Morgan ;  
“ an angel worthy the devil’s paradise itself :  
I see it all. He must certainly be hanged.  
What is to be done next ? when will it come  
on ? how shall you proceed against him ?”

“ Not yet ; haste will spoil the business,”  
replied Cluny. “ I have not yet got *all* things  
ready. These letters will but be a *part* of my  
measures. And, besides that, the Bishop of  
Dover will most likely wish to have the hand-  
ling of this young man, on some charge, per-  
haps for heresy : and I must not run in before  
the Bishop. Delicacy would not let me take  
the business of dealing with this young man out  
of the Suffragan’s hands till I know his plea-  
sure. But should he, as I suspect it will prove,  
have enough to do already with the father, now  
in Canterbury Castle, I will rid you of the  
son as well as any man in the kingdom : for,  
as I said before, these papers are only a part  
of my measures against him. You shall know  
all in time.”

“ And how did you get those papers ? ” inquired Morgan. “ I would have given any thing in the world to come by them, long ago ; but I never could succeed, although I procured the good-will of Sir Thomas Wyatt to open the correspondence.”

“ I got them, I assure you,” replied Cluny, “ quite in the way of the law ; and knowing they would be useful to you, I lost no time in coming hither to hold this consultation.”

“ You have done well,” said Morgan. “ When shall I see you again ? When shall Edward Wilford be accused ? Do think upon what must be done next. Tell me all your plan.”

“ I cannot stay now,” answered Cluny. “ To-morrow, old Wilford is to take his first examination before the Suffragan of Dover for heresy ; and I must attend Thornton this afternoon, to receive his instructions as to some part of the business in which I am to be employed. I must instantly wait on him, hav-

ing already overstayed my time in this consultation."

"I will forthwith see Collins," said Morgan; "he was one of Wyatt's men: he is now safe, and he may be made useful, if we should want a witness or so besides the papers. Though, now I think of it, I believe Collins never saw Edward Wilford."

"You should not take upon you to say that," replied Cluny.

"He may not instantly remember having seen Wilford; but you don't know what a little time given to Collins for consideration may do, — what a little time to recollect himself may bring forth. When I was Under-secretary to the Clerk of the Star-Chamber, many witnesses were brought before their Lordships, who were soon made to remember things they had long ago forgotten, or perhaps never properly remembered or understood in all their lives till their Lordships condescended to instruct them.

And so I wish you a good-morrow, Sir Francis ; and whilst you refresh Master Collins's memory, I will wait upon the Suffragan."

Cluny departed ; and Morgan, highly elevated with the hopes the late intelligence had raised within him, went in search of his convenient friend and counsellor, Samuel Collins.

## CHAPTER IX.

ALL things being prepared for the first examination of Owen Wilford, previous to the great day of trial, the Commissioners proceeded to assemble themselves together in an apartment of the Suffragan Bishop of Dover's house at Canterbury. These Commissioners consisted of Thornton, Nicholas Harpsfield, Archdeacon of Canterbury, Friar John de Villa Garcina, and Sir John Baker, a civil magistrate for the county of Kent.

The apartment was spacious, and hung throughout with tapestry; and, what was something extraordinary, the arras in this chamber was suffered to fall even over the space of the large chimney, so as completely

to conceal it: near the chimney stood a table, at the upper end of which Thornton was seated; and opposite to him, at the lower end, Friar John. On the side next to the chimney, Harpsfield and Baker sat close together, cheek-by-jowl, not unlike blood-hounds in a leash, to which, of all brute animals in creation, this pair of worthies might most justly be compared.

Nicholas Harpsfield was, in every sense of the word, a *cruel* man; Nature had given him a temper fitted for his present station; in addition to which, his education, his religion, and, though last not least, his interest all conspired, not only to sanction cruelty, but, to render it meritorious in his own eyes, he became even savage in the exercise of his delegated authority. And as Nature seldom, if ever, gives the lie to her own works, by rendering the external appearance of what is in itself bad, agreeable; so, in the present instance, she had taken especial care that no mistake should occur from only a casual view of Harpsfield's exterior. Hardened cruelty

was stamped on every one of his large and disgusting features. Each line in his face was rigid, and seemed incapable of the least variation of expression. The head and throat (by a fanciful tracer of likenesses between man and beast) might readily be supposed to bear an affinity to the bull; whilst the upper row of his teeth, white, but in form resembling the tusks of the boar, protruded beyond the thick and African lips of the Archdeacon. And in order that the whole man should be fashioned in perfect conformity, the one part to the other, Nature had supplied him with a voice more harsh, cracked, and hoarse, than that of an old boatswain who has broken his wind by hard service in many a day and night of stormy weather.

Sir John Baker, one of the most zealous among the civil powers under Mary's commission,—a man selected on account of his aptitude for such employ,—was considered by all persons so like to Bonner, that even Mary herself had been heard to say (after Sir John

Baker had kissed hands, on his appointment, at Court), “ That truly the Kentish Justice of Peace did so resemble my Lord of London, that they twain seemed but one man ; and did the spirit of the Knight but also so liken itself to that of her worthy Father in God, she nothing doubted but Kent would find good rule, or the faggots of Canterbury would smoke in the lack thereof.”

After having said that Baker and Bonner so much resembled each other, it may seem almost needless to add that Sir John was brutal—brutal in mind, brutal in body. In the latter he was so unwieldy, that the ascent of a flight of steps, the gentle rise of an eminence, or “ eight yards of uneven ground,” were to him as the purgatory of this world ; and the labour of getting over either, burthened as he was with the enormous paunch that he carried, like a mountain, before him, so put the Justice out of breath, that it was not till after long panting and blowing he could sufficiently recover him-



self to be able to speak at all. Sir John had that round head, round jowl, bottle-nose, and full and hanging lips, that so frequently mark the countenance of a sensualist; where every thing is large, fat, and jolly, except the eyes, which twinkle from out their greasy sockets, like a farthing rushlight reduced to its smallest flame.

Sir John Baker, fond of consequence, fond of being a man of office and a man of power, delighted not only in the greatness of himself, but also in the greatness of his acquaintance; and he was proud even of the mountain of fat that he carried before him, and the jolter-headed distinction of his person, because it likened him to so great a man as Bonner. “As my Right Reverend Friend, the Bishop of London, is wont to say;” or, “as my very Worshipful Acquaintance, and very good Lord, my Lord of London, is apt to do,” were phrases continually in Sir John’s mouth; who, the more to liken himself to this Very Reverend Friend, and

to resemble him in manners as he did in person, adopted as much as possible (we beg the ladies to excuse the word) the blackguard expressions and very abusive terms Bonner was wont to use in his discourse, and with which he made a point to interlard his addresses to the unhappy people who, under the title of heretics, were brought before him. Thus, a *pick-louse fellow* (a very favourite epithet with Bonner), a scurvy ass, beast, fool, jackanapes, rascal, heretic, filthy Lutheran, and many other such appellatives, Sir John had most carefully gleaned and conned by wrote from the elegant vocabulary of the Right Reverend Father in God, Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London.

This precious pair of Commissioners, Harpsfield and Baker, formed a singular contrast to their brothers in office, Thornton and Friar John. The former, though a resolute and daring fellow, thought it not unnecessary to endeavour to shroud the worst part of his character under the mask of hypocrisy. All

he did was for the Church ; he was a man all conscience. To hold religion in the heart might be enough with ordinary men ; but Thornton was so pious, so zealous, so conscientious, that he had religion all over him ; Religion possessed him from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, and made known her influence, even in the quivering of his little finger. And so tender were the pious man's feelings, that it was confidently said, that he laboured hard and sore at the conversion of many to his own way, and most especially if the heretic before him was of the softer sex, and young and pretty to boot. But as to the old women, he mostly let them go to the devil their own way ; very wisely judging that the confirmed habits of age were not to be so easily overcome as the inexperience of youth ; and that the garrulity so frequently found in women of years, would have silenced his arguments by fairly talking them down ; whilst, with the silent, timid, and

youthful party, there was every thing to be expected,—every chance that the soft, and whispering, and gentle exhortations of the Suffragan of Dover might produce some effect; especially as he used a great and kindly latitude in his arguments, allowing, with all Christian charity, for the weaknesses and sins of mere mortality,—always having that saving clause in his mouth, the Pope's absolution for sin, which, like a lusty besom, comes in, and sweeps clean away all the spots and impurities that may defile the souls of erring creatures. These were motives for the pious man's zeal, that were insisted upon by his friends, to prove how foul and false were those slanders of wicked persons who represented his character in a very different light, and who whispered that he acted from motives entirely worldly, and, under the gown of a Suffragan Bishop, and the air of a saint, carried a heart, base, selfish, and depraved.

Thornton, in his manners, as well as in his

language, much resembled a sect that sprung up after his day ; since he had about him an air of decent humility, an eye often downcast, and a speech that Oliver Cromwell himself (had he then been in existence) might have considered worthy even of a Puritan.

Friar John had, on the contrary, in his swarthy and dark countenance, his black eye of irresistible penetration, his lofty brow, and assured mien, that stamp of haughty, overbearing insolence, that unmoved gravity of deportment, which characterised both his religion and his country. He was a man, who, like the Pope, his triple-crowned master, seemed to say, " Fall at my foot, ye villains, and honour yourselves with the kiss even of my great toe." Such were these Commissioners, now assembled, expecting the arrival of the prisoner, Owen Wilford. Thornton was employed in looking very devoutly upon a holy book. His mind, it is likely, was abstracted and busy elsewhere, or he must have had a mode of reading pecu-

liar to himself, for the book that lay before him was fairly turned upside down. Baker and Harpsfield babbled together of circumstances connected with their vocation, of warrants granted by the Justice to apprehend heretics, and of judgments passed by the Archdeacon for their dismissal to a higher court, through the furnaces of his own. Friar John was the only person disengaged. He seemed to keep himself within himself, as if, even in the association of his fellows, he almost disdained to be their associate ; and sat lofty, and serious, and silent, alone, though in the company of the Commission.

At length a bustle on the outside of the chamber announced the arrival of the expected party ; and the door opening, three or four fellows, bearing in their hands bills, or glaives, as their weapons of security, ushered in the unfortunate Owen Wilford, attended by all his family, Alice, Edward, Rose, and Abel Allen ;

and, following close at the heels of the latter, appeared rather a singular intruder into such a presence,—being no other than Pincher, the faithful attendant on the Wilford family, in their adverse as well as in their prosperous fortunes. Alice and her husband alone were prisoners.

Wilford, though a man over whose head nearly sixty years had passed, advanced with a firm step and an upright carriage. He was still attired as a churchman, and wore his black silk cap over his white hairs. His countenance was composed; and there was altogether that air of resignation, but undaunted firmness about him, that impressed even the Commissioners with an involuntary feeling of respect. They were silent as he approached them. At length Thornton, who acted not only under the Commission, but also as the representative of Cardinal Pole, now addressed the prisoner.

“Master Wilford,” said he, “you come

well attended ; our summons was issued that only you, and the woman, sometime called your wife, should this morning appear before us.”

“ It was my wish,” replied Owen, “ to spare my children a scene that must, I think, give them pain ; but they so earnestly entreated to be allowed to follow me hither, that at length I yielded to their desires. Nevertheless, if it is displeasing to you, they shall return whence they came.”

“ No,” said Thornton, “ let them bide where they are, since I could wish them to witness the merciful and kind considerations that have now caused us to summon you hither. But what business has that old man to intrude himself ? And how darest thou, sirrah, bring your cur after you into this presence ? Catchpole Miller, turn out the dog.”

“ Please your Reverence,” said Abel Allen, “ I have lived so long with my dear master, that I begged to be allowed to follow him here, to see how it might fare with him ; and as for



Pincher, he is as quiet a dog as any in Canterbury, if he be let alone. And I will warrant, that if your Reverence does not be angry with him, he will sit down just near my heels, and say never a word to disturb your doings. But if you turn him out, I can't promise for his taking it so quietly. So, please your Reverence, let me and Pincher bide where we be, to see how it fares with old master, and we will be on our best behaviour."

"I may probably want you," replied Thornton. And as the Suffragan did not repeat the order to turn out the dog, Abel Allen held up his finger, nodded at Pincher, and then gave him a pat on the head; and the intelligent animal immediately disposed himself for a proper demeanour, sat down upon his haunches, with his two forelegs still upright; and, turning up his nose, so as to look Abel full in the face, he seemed to say, "I will wait upon you as quiet as you would have me."

Thornton continued. "It must be known to

you, Owen Wilford, that you are now in bonds, under a heavy charge, for a contumacious resistance of the lawful authorities of this land, in having, contrary to the faith once more so happily established in these realms, taught in your ministration things heretical, false, and dangerous, thereby leading astray her Grace's liege subjects; and, besides your own guilt in this matter, have likewise endangered the souls of the more simple people, making them, by your lies, to become subjects to the father of lies; so that your case is altogether like unto Berengarius, who did also, in the time of old, subvert, endanger, and lead astray many of the true Church. I would therefore counsel you, in all brotherly love and charity, as you have sinned like unto Berengarius; so, like unto him, and following his example, to repent you, and to recant you of your errors, while it is yet time; and, in doing so, you shall render a grateful and savoury service to their King's and Queen's Graces of these realms, and you shall save your soul from the dam-

nation of heresy : and the light of your candle, which hitherto hath been a foul and a false light, and very dusky, so that your candlestick is like to be removed, and to be toppled down, to stand only with the stinking torches borne by the linkboys of the devil,—yea, that candle shall once more become a bright and a shining light, if that your heart do change ; and then shall your tongue become as the tongue of truth, and your pen as the witness of the same. *Sin minus, veniam tibi cito, et movebo candelabrum tuum de loco suo.*”

“ May I ask,” said Owen Wilford, “ should I refuse compliance with what you will me to do, if my answers now given to you are to be brought against me ? Do you *now* constitute yourselves to sit in judgment upon me ?”

“ No,” replied Thornton ; “ nothing that you *now* say to us shall be brought against you. We have no notary here, as you see. We sent for you in brotherly love ; and to act in conformity to that charitable doctrine of the Scriptures, which teacheth, that he that shall convert

a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul alive. You may answer without fear; for we are here, if possible, to save you, but not to betray you."

"And what follows," inquired Owen Wilford, "should I stand to the Truth, as I have hitherto done ever since it pleased God to make me his minister?"

"Rather say, if you persist in a blind, a benighted, and a miserable obstinacy in your stiff-necked and abominable heresy. Why, then, we must proceed to act with you according to the tenure of our commission; and, appointing a day for your solemn examination, we shall try you in a spiritual assembly presently to be held in this city."

"Where you will condemn me to the stake," said Owen firmly.

"As a filthy heretic," cried Sir John Baker.

"As a burning shame against the Truth," said Harpsfield.

"And if we then find you stiff-necked and

obstinate," continued Thornton, "we shall proceed against you, to cast you out, to void you as a rotten member of the ministry, as one that teacheth the way to perdition, and must needs be damned; and, after excommunicating you from the Church, and disrobing you of those garments that you have assumed as the cloak of iniquity, we wash our hands of you; we condemn you not, but we turn you over to the secular powers; we give you up to the laws, for them to deal with you after the requisitions of the statutes against heresy."

"That is, to turn you over to the powers of the Civil Magistracy," said Sir John Baker. "For, as my Reverend Friend, the Lord Bishop of London, saith, we of the Church touch the life of no man; we do not wash our hands in blood, though of the worst of sinners; we but turn them out as stinking, foul-mouthed, and rotten-hearted heretics, that the laws of this country may do their part; which laws are most justly put into the hands of those who

well know how to enforce them : and my Lord of London farther saith——”

“ And my Lord of London, though he gives up such wretches and outcasts to the secular powers,” said Harpsfield, interrupting the Justice, “ yet he knows full well that there is but one way to quench heresy ; and he recommends to the Civil Magistrate, that the utmost rigour of the law should be enforced, and that the flames shall consume their bodies in like manner as the devils will torture their souls ; and thus, by destroying the wicked, to make the burning of them a pleasant and a sweet-smelling sacrifice at the altar of Truth.”

“ You are quitting the subject before us,” observed Friar John. “ We are here assembled to exhort this man to recantation, and to examine him on certain points of his faith.”

Owen Wilford darted a severe glance upon Friar John. “ Are *you* to be my examiner ?” said he. “ Then God help me ! for I must look to be betrayed, indeed, if you are such.—

But hear me. I am an Englishman, protected by the laws of my country, which, however they may be abused, still must they, in some measure at least, be outwardly respected, even by you. The marriage-treaty between our Sovereign Mary and King Philip of Spain expressly stipulated that no foreigner should hold any office in England. I therefore deny and refuse you, Friar John de Villa Garcina, altogether as a judge in the matter for which I am here brought before you. I refuse you as one who can have no lawful authority within this realm of England; and I make my appeal to Cardinal Pole." And, saying these words, Owen Wilford took from under the sleeve of his gown a written paper, which he tendered to Thornton.

Friar John smiled maliciously, and only said, "How will you enforce your appeal, should I deal with you after the authority derived from his Holiness of Rome?"

"I renounce *his* authority, even as I do yours," replied Owen.

“ Oh, be silent, my husband !” said Alice, who stood near him ; “ they may take notes of your words.”

“ I am assured they will not do so now,” answered Owen ; “ and if they did, I would not gainsay them. Once more, I offer my appeal to Cardinal Pole ;” and again Owen tendered the paper.

Thornton waved his hand. “ We cannot admit your appeal,” said he ; “ here is our commission. Look, it hath the broad seal of England. We are constituted by the Queen and Council, and also by Cardinal Pole, as Legate *a latere* to his Holiness the Pope ;” (at this mention of the Cardinal, all the Commissioners doffed their caps). “ We now, therefore, proceed against you, *omni appellatione remota* ; therefore, we cannot admit it.”

“ And you may be taught even by me,” said Friar John haughtily, “ to feel the very power you refuse, should I issue a summons in the



name of his Holiness of Rome, where you must answer before a higher court than this is."

"What!" exclaimed Wilford, "would you deal thus maliciously against me; and that even before I may be heard? I see that on all sides I am beset with malice. I will tell you how you would act by me, even as you did by my dear master, Cranmer. You hold me in your bonds; you keep me fast locked within your prisons; and you would now give me a solemn summons from Paul the Fourth, to appear before him within forty days, at Rome; and whiles for my very bonds I could not obey it, at the expiration of the time you would condemn me for contumacy to the Bishop of Rome, cast me out, and give my body to be burnt. You, Friar John—you, and all of you, did this to my master, to Cranmer; can you deny it?"

"Cranmer was held in bonds as a traitor," said Friar John. "The laws of the country kept him fast for treason; but that detention could

not interfere with his Holiness's right to summon him to Rome, to answer charges for heresy."

"But it could and did interfere to hinder him from going thither to obey that summons," replied Wilford; "and so you condemned Cranmer, amongst other matters, for contumacy. Why, what a wretched subterfuge was this! You did it—that, if he escaped by the failure of one charge, you might still hold him fast by another. Is this to be my measure also? Is this to be my case?"

"You are in no evil case, if you follow the counsel now so charitably offered to you," said Thornton. "Will you sign this paper? Will you renounce your errors?"

"You go not well to work in what you come to do," answered Wilford. "You bid me sign a recantation of errors of which I have this day said nothing to convict me. This is justice, with something of foresight to boot, since it sees that which is not yet come to light."

“ I revert to past things,” said Thornton, who was willing to gloss over the haste he showed in his desire to convict Wilford ; “ I had past things in my mind when I willed you to sign this paper. You spoke openly enough to me when I first saw you at your own house, in Wellminster ; as these papers, containing the notes of your conversation, by my secretary, will bear witness ;” and with that, Thornton turned over a bundle of papers that lay before him on the table.

“ You were not then joined in the commission with your fellows in office to examine me,” replied Wilford ; “ you came subtly and alone ; you came with an assumed air of moderation, on purpose to betray me.”

“ No, no,” said Sir John Baker ; “ Thornton then came to arrest you, only to arrest you by my warrant, granted for that purpose by me, as one of her Majesty’s Justices of the Peace.”

“ Which warrant,” cried old Abel Allen, “ saving your Worship’s presence for being so

bold as to speak, I can truly take upon me to say, your Worship did grant ; because I know, that Sister Littlewit sold to Friar John sundry fat capons, ducks, and geese, that the Friar sent as presents to your Worship, before he called upon you to grant the warrant."

"What dost thou mean by that, thou scurvy knave," cried Sir John Baker, "thou prating ass? Hold thy peace, or our next warrant shall be to commit thee to Munday Hole. Thou picklouse fellow, thou, who bid thee speak?"

"Please your Worship," said Abel Allen, "I meant no offence, but I only spoke the truth ; because, happening to be at Sister Littlewit's house when Friar John came to buy the poultry for your Worship, I helped to silence the quackling of the ducks and the geese for sister, by wringing their necks."

"And if Friar John did deal with thy sister for ducks and geese," said the Justice, "how came it, man, that you dared to suppose they were meant as bribes to me, as you

would insinuate? I insist upon your speaking out the whole truth, for this is a libel on my character."

"Please your Worship," continued the sly old serving-man, "if you bid me speak the truth, it does not become a poor man like me to disoblige you. And as Friar John did tell sister that he wanted those ducks and geese to make a present to a certain Justice of the Peace who was no small fool, I thought it must be your Worship that he meant."

"You insolent knave you!" cried Sir John Baker, "you shall smart for this, I promise you."

"Please your Worship," continued Abel, "I mean no offence, but only to speak the truth as commanded."

"Put the knave in the stocks, Catchpole Miller," said Sir John Baker.

"And let him be scourged till his back bleeds, for such insolence," cried Harpsfield.

"He is not worth your notice," said Thorn-

ton, "for he is a fool as well as a knave. I shall call upon him anon in another matter. He will be as a witness concerning the prisoner."

"May it please your Reverence," said Abel Allen, "if you want me, Master Thornton, to give my old master a character, I am ready to do it now."

"Hold your peace, fellow," cried Thornton, "or it shall be worse for you. Speak when you are spoken to, and till then remain quiet;" and turning to Owen Wilford, he continued, "Do you admit our authority to examine you?"

"Do you now profess to act under the authority of Cardinal Pole as Legate to the Pope?" inquired Wilford.

"Undoubtedly," answered Thornton; "since, in the absence of the Cardinal, I sit here to represent his commission as Legate *a latere*."

"Then I refuse you, too, as my judge," cried Wilford, "since my oath of allegiance

has been made to the Sovereign of these realms, and not to the See of Rome. I owe you no obedience."

"But you must at least admit the authority of your lawful Sovereign," said Friar John; "if you refuse that, you become guilty of high treason."

"I have never refused it," replied Wilford; "I acknowledge Mary of England as a lawful Queen, permitted to be such by Divine Providence."

"I take you by your own words, then," continued the Friar; "for lo, here is her Grace's sign manual to our commission; and here also is the broad seal of England affixed to the same. Now, can you refuse submission?"

"I dare not," said Wilford; "I acknowledge that, as my Sovereign, Mary has the power over me; and that you, acting under her authority here, stand in her place. Is that treason?"

"I trow not," answered Thornton; "and I

am glad, right glad, to find you so conformable ; and I nothing doubt but that you will presently bethink you of what is due to yourself in this matter, and will hear reason."

" God forbid," said Owen, " that I should be deaf to reason, since it is God's best gift to man. What would you with me ?"

" I would now, brother," continued the artful Suffragan,—“ for brother I would still gladly call you,—I would now ask of you certain questions touching your faith, that shall so far satisfy our minds that you are a brother of the Truth, and so justify our setting you forth-with at liberty, or else, by a full conviction of your errors, we may feel satisfied in our own consciences for referring you to the high assembly about to be held in Canterbury, there to take your spiritual trial before that solemn court. My first question will be concerning your moral conduct.—Bring forward that woman, sometime called this man's wife."

Alice, who had hitherto stood between her



son Edward and her daughter Rose, leaning from time to time on the one or the other for support, was now led forward by them. Old Abel attended as near as he could, and managed to fix himself close to the tapestry that hung athwart the chimney. Pincher still stuck to his heels, and once more quietly took his station at Allen's feet. Edward Wilford, who had not uttered a word (excepting now and then in an under voice to his mother, in the endeavour to support her spirits,) since he had entered the room, now ventured to request, in a respectful manner, that his mother might be indulged with a seat; pleading that she was ill, very ill, as the motive for this request. It was granted; and Alice being seated at the table, with a countenance which sickness of body and anxiety of mind had rendered pale as death, waited in mute attention, impressed with the conviction that *her* hour of trial was at hand.

“The first charge that we have to prefer

against you, Master Wilford," said Thornton, "is one of a moral nature, and a grievous shame it is, and a blistering sore to the person of the Church, therefore is it in some sort a spiritual matter; since, whilst a priest, you have long and openly lived with this woman, Alice Mordaunt, daughter of a worshipful Knight deceased, and sister of Sir John Mordaunt, still living, and an ancient Knight of good standing in this county. What have you to say to this charge?"

"I say," answered Wilford, "that, according to God's word and ordinance, I married this woman, more than thirty years past; and I call upon her to bear me witness, that I have been to her a loving, and, as God knoweth, a faithful husband. I am, therefore, free from all sin in that matter. Alice, have I spoken truth?"

"You have, you have," said Alice; "and, if leading up our children in the service of God, and the poor in duty to their superiors, and in affection to each other,—if that is the duty en-

joined by God to a father, you have been in nothing wanting.”

“Then you, Dame, also confess that you have lived with this man?” said Harpsfield.

“Ay, as his wife in all obedience, as I was bound to do, for more than thirty years,” replied Alice. “We were married just at the time that King Henry——”

“That is sufficient,” said Thornton; “you admit the fact; and our first business must be to proceed against you, Dame, on this minor offence,—for minor it is, when compared to the weightier charges that we have against the man. Know, that by the laws of the true Church, once more so happily established in these realms, if any priest holds a woman by the sacrament of marriage, such a contract is held null and void, and the issue of such a marriage illegitimate; and the woman so married stands in the case of a harlot, or wanton person.”

“My mother is an honourable woman,—a wife by the laws of God and man!” exclaimed Ed

ward Wilford; "and I will maintain her honour with my sword, whilst I draw breath!"

"Hold your peace, young man!" said Thornton.

"Or I will commit you," cried Sir Johu Baker. "You are here on sufferance."

"And are liable to the penalty of branding in the forehead for this interruption of the Commission," said Harpsfield.

"And must submit to the powers you cannot control!" exclaimed Friar John, as he looked with an air of contempt upon Edward Wilford.

"Peace, my son! peace, I conjure you!" said Owen Wilford. "Remember, I only consented that you should witness this scene on your promise of silence, let what would pass."

Edward bowed to his father, and was silent. But Rose ventured to speak; and she now did so with her accustomed shrewdness. "You have brought no proof, Master Thornton, of my mother's marriage; and I thought, in all cases of this kind, the law demanded a written

document of a marriage before it could be pronounced as void."

"Here be goodly gear indeed!" exclaimed Sir John Baker; "when a chittling like that dares to put in her word. But, as my friend Edmund Bonner says, these be times when women use their petticoats like a robe of authority, and prate of law, religion, and right rule, like a gownsman, or as if they were no more than matters of housewifery."

"Put her in the stocks, Sir John," said Harpsfield; "you have the power to do it for her impertinence."

"She is but a child," said Thornton, "and has been ill taught by her parents. The confession of your mother, damsel, respecting this her marriage with a priest, is sufficient. The law of the true Church, now established in England, holds no such marriage lawful."

"My parents were married before my father was in holy orders," replied Rose.

"So much the worse," said Thornton, "as it

makes the sin of your father the greater, that he should enter upon the priestly office whilst living in a state contrary to it. You, Alice Mordaunt,—for by that name only can I call you,—you must be content to undergo the sentence of the law, to do penance, at a time which shall hereafter be appointed, and in a place hereafter also to be named; and, till the time arrives for the penance of your offence, as you are both sick and infirm, you shall not return to the common gaol, but shall rest a prisoner in my house, in company with certain other offenders of your own sex.”

“And must I be parted from *him*?” said Alice, as she looked wildly upon her husband. “Oh! if you have any mercy, send me back to the prison, for *there* I did see him, though it was but for a brief space each day.”

“We must not countenance any such abominable connexions!” cried Harpsfield; “it is against the letter of our commission.”

“Is there no remedy?” said Alice—and she

burst into a flood of tears, as she added, "Then may God help me, and save thee, my dear husband, for we are like to have hard measure from these men!"

Rose pressed her mother in her arms; whilst Owen looked tenderly upon his wife, and bade her, for the sake of their children, to endeavour to support herself. "For they may soon have no other parent, Alice," said he, "to whom they may look for counsel. For their sakes, Alice, I bid you be comforted, and to God I commit both them and you." Owen turned aside his head, as if fearful of looking upon his wife, lest the sight of her distress should shake that firmness of spirit he wished to observe in the presence of his enemies.

Thornton proceeded. "The second charge against you, Owen Wilford, is one that concerns your own family as well as the Church; since it should seem that, both in private and in public, you have read the Liturgy now prohibited,—an abominable service first introduced into these

realms during the dreadful night of Error that held in darkness the light of Truth in the time of the late King, Edward the Sixth, whom God in mercy to his Church has been pleased to remove from us, as the great stumbling-block to the salvation of his people.”

“ It hath pleased God,” said Owen Wilford, “ to take to his own bosom that sweet young Prince, in whom so many excellencies both of mind and body were united, that he was perfected in his course, and fit for his high calling even at an age when others do but begin to run their race. Spare the memory of Edward, as you would honour truth.”

“ This is no answer to the charge,” observed Friar John: “ Did you, or did you not, make use of such a liturgy ?”

“ I obeyed the orders of the late King,” said Wilford, “ when I took upon me the office of the ministry.”

“ What service then, and what doctrines, did you use and teach in your own family ?” in-



quired Thornton, "for I come not yet to the matter of the Church."

"I taught them what I myself believed," said Wilford; "*Verbum Dei.*"

"You have brought your family here uncalled for," replied Thornton; "so, you must not take it amiss, if I make them as a witness against you. I shall first examine your servant."

"Bid that old dog come forward," said Sir John Baker; "let us hear him."

"Is it me, or Pincher, your Worship would examine?" said Abel Allen; "we both of us serve the same master, and scorn to tell a lie."

"It is thou, thou knave!" answered Sir John. "Come forward, fellow, and answer to what the Suffragan would desire."

"Marry and that I will. I will answer his Reverence," said Abel, "as he would have me; for I remember him, in old times, when he counselled me to obey my superiors; and cited, as an example for obedience, his Worshipful self."

‘For, look you, Abel Allen,’ says Master Thornton to me, ‘I be secretary to Archbishop Cranmer, and see how I obey him; if he does but wink, it is law to me.’ Your Reverence may remember when you gave me that good counsel, at a time when Bishop Cranmer was the King’s favourite, and one of the greatest men in the nation.”

“You have so good a memory, fellow,” answered Thornton, “that I shall have little trouble in gaining a reply to my questions from you. What doctrines were taught in your family by that man you call your master?”

“Many, and good ones,” said old Abel; “and especially, that we should be faithful to our masters.”

“Good God!” exclaimed Edward Wilford, “is this an inquisition, that my father’s own servant, a poor and ignorant man, should be cited to endeavour to draw from him what would endanger my father?”

“Silence,” said Friar John peremptorily;

“ I command it :” and turning to Thornton, he added, “ I would beg of you, worthy Suffragan, to let me examine this old serving-man, for I see he is cunning :—Were you ever enjoined by your master to go to confession ? Did he ever confess you himself ?”

“ In truth, did he,” replied Abel ; “ for I remember, that when the ale turned sour, and nobody cared to say how it came to pass, master got the truth out of me ; so I told him it lacked by some pounds the right quantity of hops.”

“ Pshaw !” said Friar John ; “ I do not ask you about ale and hops—Did he ever bid you seek a ghostly father for the confession of your sins ?”

“ Master never let us servants talk about ghostly things,” replied Abel, “ in his house ; for he said that such stories did but frighten the maidens : and as to sins, the Lord help the man who is free from them !”

“ Why, what a fellow have we to deal with

here?" said Thornton: "you can make nothing out of him,—let me try. Did you, Abel, ever hear your master read the mass?"

"That's a point I can't so well answer," said Abel, after a moment's pause; "for, mass being a Latin lingo, I don't know what is, or is not, mass. But I often heard master and Mistress Rose read together out of a big book in a strange tongue; and it might be Latin or mass; all one for me, for I could not understand it."

"You will get nothing out of a sly old fox like that," said Harpsfield, "unless you give him a taste of the question;—that is a thing that makes a man understand any language after the first trial."

"It may do so with the people who speak the Spanish tongue," replied Allen; "but Englishmen are less apt scholars, Master Harpsfield."

"But what have you been taught to believe

by your master, old man?" said Friar John:  
"Do you believe in God?"

"I do, most truly," answered Abel in a solemn manner; and he bowed his head as he spoke.

"That is the only answer you have given, that we can yet understand," continued the Friar. "Do you believe in the devil?"

"As plain as if I saw him before my eyes," said Abel Allen; and he looked the Friar directly in the face.

"You may question this man yourself, Thornton," said Friar John; "for he is too ignorant for me to deal with him."

"Have you been taught by your master to respect the laws?" inquired Sir John Baker. "Speak up, sirrah,—speak up. I say, once more,—Do you respect the laws?"

"Yea, that I do," replied Abel Allen.

"And do you respect the Church, and the Queen, and the Clergy?" said Harpsfield.

“ And the Justices of the Peace, who dispense the laws ?” cried Sir John Baker.

“ I respect them all,” replied old Abel ; “ and though a Justice of the Peace might bear the laws in paniers, like an ass, upon his back, still I respect them.” And the sly old serving-man bowed with the utmost reverence to Sir John Baker as he spoke.

The Justice puffed, but did not like to understand the old Kentishman’s insinuation ; and Thornton, finding that he could make nothing of such a witness, bid Allen stand aside, and once more addressed Owen Wilford. “ What service did you perform in your church of Westminster ?” said he : “ I must beg you to speak plainly.”

“ The service of the Church of England,” replied Owen, “ in the English tongue.”

“ Then you renounce the Mass ?” continued Thornton.

“ I renounce it altogether,” replied Wilford.

“ Did you ever cause the rood to be ho-

noured by your congregation? did you make processions on Rogation, or Palm Sundays? did you keep the vigils of Easter, and cause to be represented the Resurrection in the eyes of the people? did you present holy bread and water to the congregation? did you——”

“ I did none of these things ?” said Owen.

“ And why did you not ?” inquired Friar John.

“ Because I hold them to be not only childish and useless ceremonies, but also idolatrous, and contrary to the written Word,” answered Wilford.

“ I am sorry to hear this again, and thus openly repeated before the Commission,” said Thornton. “ You have already said enough to justify our committing you to take your trial before the Spiritual Court. I shall now but ask you one question more, and that is of the utmost importance. In what manner do you consider the real presence of the consecrated bread in the Sacrament ?”

Owen Wilford turned towards Thornton, and was preparing to answer him with the utmost solemnity of manner and aspect, when Edward Wilford suddenly exclaimed, "Be silent, my father!—be silent! These men are assembled to betray you by your words, in order to render useless the appeal that you would forward to the Cardinal. I am sure I heard the movement of a pen upon paper behind that arras that hangs athwart the chimney. Some one is there concealed, and making notes of the examination."

"Take care, young man," said Thornton, "how you dare to accuse us of such baseness. Your father has our assurance that he may speak freely and in safety."

"Let me examine, then, behind the arras," replied Edward, "before my father proceeds to give his answer."

"You shall not!" said Thornton,—“you shall not! My word is sufficient, insolent young



man. Who dares deny my word, or attempt to prove me guilty of falsehood?"

"None but a beast would dare to do as much," said Abel Allen. And, as he spoke, he quickly snatched hold of the open side of the arras, that hung down straight and loose before the chimney, accompanying the action with a low exclamation of "Hist! Pincher, hist!" And the dog, well-trained and obedient to the least intimation of his master's will, instantly sprang behind the arras, and fiercely attacked some one who was there concealed; since the loud bark, followed by the deep growl of the animal, was accompanied with a cry for help. "Help! help me, for our Lady's sake! or I shall be throttled and a dead man!"

In a moment Thornton jumped up, Harpsfield did the same, and Sir John Baker made an effort at an unusual motion of agility; but, in doing so, his own weight overpowered him before he could recover himself from a lateral

movement by which he had lost his balance ; and, tumbling towards the chimney, he not only overturned a little table that had been stationed behind the arras for the service of the concealed notary, but upset the notary himself, who was still struggling to free himself from the dog. Nothing could exceed the confusion that now ensued. Sir John managed so far to get up as to remain seated upon the floor ; where, wiping his face, and puffing and blowing, and swearing all the oaths he could possibly recollect at the moment, ever to have been sworn by Bonner in his hottest mood of passion, he gave way to a torrent of rage and fury. Thornton threatened to make this insult even a Star-Chamber business ; Harpsfield roared out for branding in the hand, putting to the rack, and committing to Munday Hole, all in a breath ; whilst Friar John stood still and said nothing, but glanced his dark eye upon Edward Wilford with peculiar malignancy.

Abel Allen ran towards the door, and, in the

confusion which prevailed, managed to open it to its full extent ; and then, as if more desirous to secure the safe retreat of Pincher than for any other matter at the present moment, he loudly and publicly called off the dog with, "Come off, Pincher,—come off, I say!" and away ran Pincher after his old master's heels, bearing in his mouth the spoils of victory, which were nothing less than a sheet of paper that had lately been in the hand of the discomfited party, and which the noble terrier fairly carried off, by running down stairs with it in his mouth, as fast as his four legs could carry him. Abel Allen also thought it proper to retreat, before Thornton, or any body else, could sufficiently recover himself to issue an order for his detention ; and so, losing no time, ere the Commissioners well knew what they were about, both the dog and his master managed to leave the house and to set forward on their road to Sister Littlewit's in Canterbury.

Some degree of order was now restored ;

when the united efforts of Harpsfield and Thornton, who were both strong men, at length succeeded in once more getting Sir John upon his legs. The notary also now sneaked out of his hiding-place, his gown and tippet hanging ragged and tattered by his late contest with the victorious Pincher; but the blushes of his defeat were completely concealed, for his ink-horn having been overturned in the fray, the ink had found its way over his beard and face, and had so completely disguised him, that if, as it is said, blackness be the natural colour of the devil, it would now have been no difficult matter to have mistaken Lawyer Cluny for that prince of the powers of darkness; since Cluny it was, and no other, whom Thornton had thought proper thus to station in ambush, to make notes of Wilford's examination for his own special purposes, in the hope that, by inducing the unhappy man to believe that no note would be taken of his answers, he might so effectually commit himself, as to render all

attempts in his favour with the higher powers wholly fruitless. Cluny's station had been convenient; since it must be remembered that the chimneys or fire-places of this period were not only large enough to contain many persons within their ample space, but also poured down, through their immense tunnels, such a body of light, that it was as easy for Cluny (when shrouded by the arras in front) to see to write the examination, as if he really had received light from a window. The trick was now apparent, and filled the sufferers with indignation at the sight of so much art and wickedness.

“Thornton,” said Wilford, when the Suffragan had once more taken his seat, “base as I knew you were, I find you even yet baser than my worst thoughts could make you. You have this day meanly attempted to betray me by my own lips. You have broken faith with me.”

“I was bound to keep none with you,” replied Thornton with unblushing effrontery; “and in this matter you have had no means

used towards you but what have been used also towards others in your case.”

“The common practice of an act of treachery cannot justify its baseness,” said Wilford. “I now remember me, indeed, that I am not the first man whom you have thus attempted to ensnare. The same trick was practised to betray the venerable Latimer, as he himself declared; I remember it but too well. But why should I strive with you?—You are here met together to compass my ruin. Do your pleasure then; I will submit to it.”

“We can have no purpose to injure you, unless you injure yourself,” replied Thornton. “I must do my duty, since you have already given me sufficient warrant to remand you to the prison whence you came. On this day month, you must take your trial in the Spiritual Court; there you cannot use evasion.—Cluny, call in the officers.—And for you, young man,” continued the Suffragan, addressing Edward Wilford,—“the part you have this day taken to

insult our commission shall not pass unrequited. Our Notary here has sustained damage by the assault of a fierce animal, set upon him by you."

"Not by me," replied Edward; "I merely requested to be suffered to examine the arras."

"You were at least aiding and abetting," said Cluny; "and certainly a party concerned. The thing is actionable. I have sufficient evidence to prove an assault,—and that assault too was made whilst I was in the discharge of my duty. Shall I call in the Catchpole?"

"Do so," replied Thornton. "You, Owen Wilford, must return forthwith to Canterbury Castle; and though, by the invalidity of your marriage, your children are held illegitimate, and therefore become as bond-slaves to the see of Canterbury, yet, for the present, your son is suffered to be at large. Your daughter shall have some indulgence, and may rest in my house to comfort her mother; for the woman is my prisoner, till her penance be performed."

“ Must my child,—must Rose rest in your bonds?” said Owen Wilford.

“ She shall not,” exclaimed Edward; “ my sister has committed no offence, and she will be at large, or I will remain to protect her.”

“ She needs no protection here,” replied Thornton; “ nor do I stay the damsel as a prisoner. You may do as you list with her. I offered to keep her here but as an act of charity to that sinful and unhappy woman, her mother; who, you but now said, was grievously sick. Do your own will in the affair.”

“ Let Rose stay with me,” said Alice; “ let her stay to comfort me, since I must be a prisoner to this man; but surely the law, if law can condemn me, would suffer me to go back to the same prison with my husband.”

“ The keeping you here, good woman,” said Sir John Baker, who had by this time blown himself into something like a renewed supply of air for the purpose of breathing,—“ the keeping you here is quite according to custom; for it is a fact well known, that my Right Reverend



Friend, the Bishop of London, keeps many prisoners in his own house at Fulham, and has whipped several of them also with his own godly hands, upon their bare backs, in his own garden. And some of these prisoners, as my Reverend Friend is alike an enemy to idleness, and every other vice, he sometimes employs to assist in his hay-fields, and what not, as he may happen to need their services. The Suffragan of Dover, therefore, cannot do better than to follow that great man's example. He is consequently quite justified in keeping you as a prisoner in his own house; since my Lord of London does the same thing at Fulham."

"I must submit," said Alice. "I beseech you to let me bid a last farewell to my husband and to my son." Alice arose from her seat; and, without speaking, she threw her arms round the neck of Owen Wilford, and burst into a flood of tears. Edward and Rose knelt each on either side of their parents; and, raising their hands reverently, implored their blessing. The Commissioners stood astonished at the au-

dacity of these innocent and suffering people ; but so deep was the passionate sorrow that now filled the hearts of the unhappy family, that even the Commissioners were for a moment overpowered by it, and they made no movement to part them.

“ Farewell, my wife !” said Owen ; “ Farewell, my poor children ! Pray for me, as I will do for you ; and may God Almighty watch over you, and bless you !”

As he spoke, he looked first at Alice, and then upon his children ; whilst he placed his hands upon the heads of the latter, and stood between them, old, venerable, and afflicted ; presenting a spectacle of pious resignation and calm suffering, that might have moved a heart of flint to pity. But he stood before men whose breasts, steeled by cruelty and the fury of a bigoted zeal, were wholly incapable of remorse. At the present period, when such exertions of arbitrary power are unknown in England,—when the glorious Reformation of the Church has established liberty on the surest

basis,—when rulers are no longer bigots, and subjects have ceased to be the victims of bigotry, such scenes of cruelty may seem but as the fables of a frightened and exaggerated fancy. Some even may say, Could such things have been? But the still existing records of those times of terror prove, alas! that such scenes speak but a *true tale*;—the remembrance of which must fill our hearts with thankfulness to that Almighty Providence who has freed us from those dreadful trials and perils that brought so many of our fathers, even in their grey hairs, with bitter sorrow to the grave!

To return to our narrative. Whilst Owen Wilford blessed his wife and children, not a tear was in his eye,—not the least convulsive movement of strong, though suppressed feeling, agitated his frame; on the contrary, his spirit seemed to be sustained by a power more than human; and the religious fervour of his mind spread over his venerable and manly features an expression so noble, so elevated, that, whilst in the very bonds of his enemies, he looked as if

his soul had soared far beyond this earth, and all that is earthy, to hold communion with his Maker. His eyes were raised, radiant with fervent hope; and his cheek glowing from the enthusiasm of his feelings, the old man stood, like the Patriarch who offered up his son, his only son Isaac, to his God; as if he also was ready to make whatever sacrifice his Heavenly Father should require at his hands. His children and his wife, awed by his manner, and by the expression of his countenance, knelt in silence before him, and scarcely drew breath, lest they should interrupt the least accent that fell from his tongue.

Owen bade them unite with him in a common petition to Providence for comfort and support in this their hour of sorrow; and that they might be ready and willing to follow wherever God should please to guide them, though it were to the very stake itself, for the glory of His name. His wife, his children reverently and devoutly joined with him in prayer, and repeated word for word after him as he dictated;

whilst the Commissioners stood in a group together, at the farthest end of the room, looking on in silence at a scene that, in spite of themselves, they dared not interrupt. Some power, some feeling more mighty than that of their own bad passions, held them back; and it was not till Owen had ended his petition, had raised his family from the ground, and embraced them severally in his arms, that they ventured to propose his removal from the house.

Edward offered his father in silence his arm for support. Owen cast a last look upon Alice and Rose, and instantly retired with his son, without uttering a word. The officers resumed their custody of the prisoner, when he was without the door of the apartment. After having received her husband's last embrace, Alice had stood, with her hands pressed together, almost stupified by the terrible prospect of this final separation. She did not change her attitude now he was gone; she seemed scarcely to breathe; but her eye wandered wildly from object to object; and when she heard the noise of

the halberts and bills of the officers of justice, and the heavy tramp of their feet as they descended with Owen Wilford down the stairs, a frightful sense of her desolation seemed to burst upon her mind, to recall her to life. She uttered an hysterical cry, and fell down upon the floor in so strong a convulsion fit, that even the Commissioners thought the penance to which they had doomed her would be acted in another world. Rose, her child, now her only friend, her only support, preserved her presence of mind in an admirable manner; for, whilst the persecutors of her unhappy mother ran against each other, and showed some distraction, not knowing what to do to save the life of their victim, that she might undergo her punishment hereafter, Rose suggested every remedy that was applied, with an extraordinary composure of mind; and at length besought the Commissioners that her mother might be removed to another chamber and be put to bed; assuring them that unless this was done, and every care taken of her, she was sure her parent would not

survive the day. She then respectfully begged Thornton to suffer her to attend her mother; telling him at the same time, with the utmost firmness, that if he denied these requests he must look to the consequence, as the law gave him no power over her mother's life. The Suffragan granted all she asked; and Rose was furnished with whatever was necessary on this sad emergency.

The servants who had assisted in the removal of Alice, had left the door open after them, when they quitted the room where the scene just related had passed. The Commissioners had not ordered it to be closed. There was a moment's silence amongst them; when Sir John Baker waddled towards the open door, and there stood snuffing for a minute, as if he was drawing into his nose some very acceptable perfume. He turned round to his companions; and the first words spoken after Alice's removal were by Sir John himself, who remarked, with a smile, and a twinkle of his little eyes, "I think I smell the goose."

Nothing could be more just than this observation ; for scarcely had it escaped the lips of the Worshipful Justice of the Peace, when a servant announced that dinner was served, and had been ready for some time ; but the cook having received orders not to interrupt the Commission, the announcement of dinner was postponed till the departure of the prisoner. Thornton now requested every one present to partake of dinner ; and all the party accepted the invitation except Friar John, who said he was obliged to attend Sir Richard Southwell, on some business of consequence ; and bowing to the Commissioners by merely a slight inclination of the head, he departed, as they walked down to the dining-hall in the Bishop's house.

Few persons are insensible to the attractions of a well-spread table, and the genuine spirit of sociability which is inspired by good cheer, good wine, and a good appetite. All the parties present seemed fully sensible of the value of these good things. Sir John Baker chuckled as his mouth watered at the savory smell of



the noble goose that had before attracted his attention, and now stood before his eyes in the middle of the table, flanked by a dish of rich stewed venison, a mess of friar's-soup, and sundry other relishing dishes; whilst the roast beef of Old England,—a dish as standard in Queen Mary's times as in our own, was placed, like the king of good things, at the top of the board.

Even Harpsfield, at the sight of dinner, managed to unbend one feature of his rigid face; and once or twice opened his mouth, and smacked his lips, like a dog who licks his chops as he eyes the dish he is about to devour. Cluny had retired for a moment to wash the ink off his face; and returning into the apartment, well knowing his place, he modestly took his station below the great silver salt basin that stood in the very centre of the table, as a line of demarcation to separate the plebeian guests from those of aristocratic precedence.

Thornton tucked a white napkin close under

his chin, and pronounced a Latin benediction upon the meats with his accustomed solemnity ; whilst Sir John Baker, whose impatience to fall to could scarcely endure the length of the grace, stood casting an eye between beef, goose, friar's-soup, and venison, as if doubtful upon what good thing he should begin the pre-meditated attack. All the party now appeared, by a simultaneous agreement, to lay aside business for the present ; and Queen Mary, and her fire and faggots, and Owen Wilford, and poor Alice and Rose, seemed to be as much forgotten as if they had never existed ; whilst Sir John Baker stood up, and, brandishing a large carving-knife, prepared to anatomize the smoking goose, with as deep an interest, and as entire an absorption of all his faculties in this important office, as if life or death had depended upon his success.

Whilst jaws were going, knives rattling, and cups finding their swift circulation round the board, little conversation passed between the parties ; since the English, at all times, gene-

rally discussed their dinner before they did their politics, or any other matter of regular discourse.

Sir John did honour to the goose, commended the stewed venison, paid his respects to the friar's-soup, but was perfectly charmed by a certain mess of fricaseed cocks-combs, which he repeatedly declared, averred, and protested to be the most dainty relish he had ever tasted in all his life. "Upon the honour of my Knighthood," said Sir John, "whoever cooked that mess has the daintiest hand at a fricasee in all the kingdom. I wish my Right Reverend Friend, the Bishop of London, could only taste that dish; though, if he did, I question, Master Thornton, if it might not cost you the loss of the cook; for, I verily think, my Right Reverend Friend would give the value of half of his diocese to gain such a king of the spit. With your good leave, I'll take another taste of it. Done to a turn,—spiced to a hair,—the flavour of the ginger just enough to know there is ginger, but without being hot in

the mouth. And then such a sauce ! I question if twenty different ingredients did not go to it, to make it so savoury, so oily, so smooth, and so sweet to the palate. I'll thank you, Master Cluny, to send the dish forward this way, as I prefer helping myself :” and again Sir John renewed his plate, and his relish, and his warm commendations on the skill of the cook.

“ I will tell you by-and-by, when the cloth is withdrawn,” said Thornton, “ by whom that dish was cooked. In the mean time, I beg of you, Sir John, and of you, Archdeacon Harpsfield, not to spare it, since it is no novelty to me,—I have had many such dishes of late.”

Neither the Justice nor the Archdeacon needed much pressing ; and, having taken as much of the mess as they could well manage to cram down their throats between them, they left a taste of the dainty for the Attorney, and Cluny made a clean dish of it.

When the cloth was withdrawn, and wine, fruits, and spices, were placed upon the table, Thornton dismissed the attendants, and the

Commissioners seasoned their cups with a little more discourse than had yet passed between them; but Sir John, who seemed to relish good cheer even in retrospection, could not dismiss from his mind the mess of fricaseed cocks-combs, nor the praises which he continued to think so well deserved by the cook. “Now the varlets are away,” said the Suffragan Bishop of Dover, “I will tell you who cooked that dish. It was messed up by a woman that I keep as prisoner in my house on a charge of heresy,—as obstinate a Lutheran, I assure you, as ever turned up a nose at his Holiness. But, seeing that she has good skill in these matters of the stew-pan, I make her useful in her vocation.”

“You are quite right in so doing,” said Sir John Baker; “my Right Reverend Friend, my Lord of London, does the same thing. He spared that rascal heretic, Thomas Tomkins, till the hay harvest was got in, because the fellow did the work of any other four men put together in the field; and after hay

harvest, Edmund Bonner burnt the picklouse rogue as he deserved."

"That will be the end of Mother Garnish," said the Suffragan, "the famous hand at a fri-casee; for she will no more recant, she will no more turn from the fire, than she would turn a pancake before it is well browned. She is as obstinate in her faith as she is in her cooking, and will let no one advise her in either matter. You never saw such a determined old woman. But she must roast like her own meats, for recant she will not."

"It would be a great pity,—it would be a most serious loss," replied Sir John Baker: "good cooks are scarce now-a-days,—one don't now find half such good cooks as we used to do in my young days. This new doctrine of the Reformation has spoilt them; for your very dishwife now leaves her spit and ladle, and runs after these mad preachers (such as old Wilford) of the Truth, as they call it. And now, instead of the dainty omelets and nice fish-dinners, that it was formerly quite a study

to render excellent on fast-days, they never trouble their heads about the matter; and I have known some of these cooks so audacious as to send one up a half raw beef-steak, even on a Friday, merely out of contempt to the Pope. These are serious times, Master Thornton,—very serious times, and threatening to the country; and her Majesty, in her great nobleness, does most right in endeavouring to put a stop to them,—to spread terror, as I would say, into the very hearts of such people; for, if she did not, there is no knowing where they might end, or what we might come to, when half raw beef-steaks and cold mutton-chops would be thought good enough for the Magistrates and the Clergy.”

“Ay,” said Harpsfield; “and if these mad Reformers are not put down, every thing will be changed in England, a lukewarm spirit will spring up amongst us, and that under the name of mercy and charity, and all the strong supports of Government will be put down. We shall have neither the rack, nor fires, nor any

other lawful engines allowed us as the chastisements of the people. They will tell us by-and-by that the gallows is sufficient punishment for any rogue. And the clergy will suffer too, if the new doctrines prevail. We shall have no offerings to images, no buying of pardons, no confession or absolution fees; as if we, the labourers in the true Church, were not worthy of their hire. Even a candle end, as Sir Thomas More used to say, will be grudged at the altar of a saint.—But, a blessing on her Grace, sweet Mary of England!—she is the truest friend that ever the Roman Church could desire to support her cause. She will bring back the good old times, and crush these peace-prating reforming rascals in the egg-shell.”

“And well it is,” cried Cluny, “that her Grace should do so; for, if these fellows are allowed to spread their doctrines through the land, it will be a serious injury to the law: we shall have parsons making up quarrels instead of attorneys, and what they call equity will be held in more respect than the letter of the law.”



“Her Grace is a blessing to the country,” said the Suffragan Bishop of Dover: “she has shown her great wisdom in nominating the right men in their right places, to be as the heads or polar stars to the Church. She knows who is proper for a Bishop; and, when there is no See vacant to fit the man into his place, she makes him a Suffragan Bishop, to wait a proper opportunity for his farther promotion.”

“She is a rare Queen,” cried Sir John Baker, “and stands amongst Queens, like a salamandered turkey amongst dishes,—the crown of them all. I propose her health in a brimmer.”

“With all my heart,” said Thornton. “I’ll never refuse a cup to the health of such a gracious Queen.”

The cups were filled, and the health of Queen Mary was given and drank in such a hearty manner, that the dinner-hall rang again to the pledge. After the health of Queen Mary had been well washed down the throats of her admirers, there was one of those dead

pauses in conversation that even now so often occur in an English assembly, to the utter astonishment of foreigners, and more especially if they be French.

But Sir John Baker, who could not forget the fricaseed cocks-combs, once more returned to the mention of the cook, as some relief to this solemn silence. "I have been thinking, Master Thornton," said he, "that, seeing how rare a thing now-a-days is a real good cook, it would be a great pity to lose such a jewel as you have in your house for a mere obstinacy of opinion, and the woman most likely is ignorant too; and, besides this consideration, the rabble make such an outcry about what they call the *cruelty* of the Commission, that I think it might be as well, now and then, just to please them in their own way, and to spare a heretic or so, to do an act they will call merciful: and you know, likewise, there is such a string of heretics to be burnt this sessions, that if you spare one out of the number it will not be missed.—

What say you, Master Thornton? You may not like to keep the person you spare in your own house; but I shall have no objection to take her off your hands as my cook; for my own domestic in that way gets very old, and seems to have lost the right trick of well larding a capon. So, turn your heretic over to me, and say nothing about the matter, and I'll give you as many good dinners as she can sauce up for you, to show my sense of the favour."

"I should fear to do so," said Thornton: "the thing is quite against the law."

"Pardon me for being so bold as to interfere in this business," cried Cluny; "but I think that I could find a precedent. Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, did the same thing. He spared a heretic that dished him up a dainty dinner at Farnham Castle—he spared her for the sake of her cooking; and she is alive at this moment."

"That's true," said Sir John Baker; "that's the best precedent you ever yet found, Cluny

either in or out of the law. I remember having heard Gardiner himself tell the story to my right Reverend Friend, the Bishop of London, when he asked his Reverence to dinner at his house in Southwark, where he promised his dainty heretic should dish up a stewed carp; and we all ate of it together at that very house which was afterwards ransacked by the rebel Sir Thomas Wyatt;—I remember it well.”

“I cannot refuse such a precedent as that founded on any act of the late Bishop of Winchester, St. Peter assoil him,” said Thornton. “So, I have no objection, Sir John, to spare the cook’s life, be she heretic or not, if we can but make some of the Canterbury brawlers believe that she recanted. For there are so many uncharitable illnatured people, who would be glad to pick a hole in my coat, (and I am not yet quite so elevated as the Bishop of Winchester was, who might snap his fingers at slander,) that I must look about me and be careful.”

“ I think I could manage the business for you, gentlemen,” said Cluny, “ and that at a small expense. I know that obstinate old heretic, Mother Garnish, very well ;—she can neither write nor read. I will get her to put her cross (instead of her name) to a recantation ; I can witness it myself : she will do this fast enough, if I tell her that the paper contains a confession of her belief in the Reformed Faith. That recantation, so signed and witnessed, will secure you, Master Thornton, from any unpleasant consequences, should the thing come to the Queen’s ears by any meddling talebearer. And as the woman is a heretic, you know, there is no law that binds us to be very particular in what way we may deal with her ; and, after all, she ought to thank us for playing her a trick to save herself from roasting, in order that she may roast capons. If you like it, I will do the thing this very afternoon ; for I always carry a few recantations, ready drawn up, in my satchel.

They want only the signature and date, and the charge is but a trifle that I make upon them. Shall I go about it?"

The thing was applauded and agreed to; and Cluny left the party, to talk over the cook, and to get her to sign, by her mark, the paper she could not read for lack of that useful accomplishment, an acquaintance with the alphabet. And whilst Cluny was busied with Mother Garnish, Thornton, Harpsfield, and Sir John Baker, adjourned into the garden of the Suffragan Bishop, to play a game at bowls on the smooth green lawn, kept in high order for that pastime.

And having said so much in this chapter about these worthies, Harpsfield and Thornton, as well as Bishop Bonner, we think that we cannot conclude it better than by giving a brief extract from "Fuller's Church History," wherein that admirable author gives a slight but expressive sketch of their several characters.

"In the diocese of Canterbury, Cardinal Pole appeared not *personally* active in the pro-

secution of any to death. Whilst others impute this to his stateliness, not stooping to so small matters, we more charitably ascribe it to his favouring the Protestant party, having formerly lost the Papacy under that imputation. But seeing it is a true maxim, which an heathen man layeth down,—‘It is enough for a private man, that he himself do no wrong;—but a public person must provide that those under him do no injury,’ I see not how the Cardinal can be excused *from the guilt of that innocent blood, which Thornton, his suffragan, and cruel Harpsfield, his archdeacon, shed like water in and about the city of Canterbury.*”

Of Bishop Bonner, Fuller says—“Crosse we the Thames into the diocese of the Bishop of London, under Bonner, whom all generations shall call Bloody. St. Paul mentioneth his fighting with beasts at Ephesus, after the manner of men; which some expound, his encountering with people, men for their shape and sex, but beasts for their cruel minds and manners. In

the same sense we may say that lion, tiger, wolf, bear, yea a whole forest of wild beasts, met in Bonner, killing two hundred in the compass of three years. No sex, quality, or age, escaped him, whose fury reached from John Fetty, a lad of *eight years old*, by him scourged to death, even unto Hugh Laverock, a cripple, sixty-eight years old, whom he caused to be burnt!"

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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